



Dharmamegha in yoga and yogācāra: the revision of a superlative metaphor

Karen O'Brien-Kop¹ 

© The Author(s) 2020

Abstract The *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* concludes with a description of the pinnacle of yoga practice: a state of *samādhi* called *dharmamegha*, cloud of dharma. Yet despite the structural importance of *dharmamegha* in the soteriology of Pātañjala yoga, the *śāstra* itself does not say much about this term. Where we do find *dharmamegha* discussed, however, is in Buddhist yogācāra, and more broadly in early Mahāyāna soteriology, where it represents the apex of attainment and the superlative statehood of a bodhisattva. Given the relative paucity of Brahmanical mentions of *dharmamegha* in the early common era, Patañjali appears to adopt this key metaphor from a Mahāyāna context—and to revise its primary meaning from fullness to emptiness. This article traces the early elaborations of *dharmamegha* in Buddhist texts, and, drawing on conceptual metaphor theory, lays out four arguments that each, in part, accounts for the stark contrast in how classical yoga and yogācāra employ the superlative metaphor of *dharmamegha*.

Keywords Yoga · *Yogasūtra* · Patañjali · yogācāra · Conceptual metaphor · *Yogācārabhūmi*

Abbreviations

AKBh	<i>Abhidharmakośabhāṣya</i>
BoBh	<i>Bodhisattvabhūmi</i>
Bv	<i>Buddhavaṃsa</i>
DBS	<i>Daśabhūmikasūtra</i>
MB	<i>Mahābhārata</i>
MP	<i>Milindapañha</i>
MSA	<i>Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāraśāstra</i>

✉ Karen O'Brien-Kop
karen.obrien-kop@roehampton.ac.uk

¹ University of Roehampton, London, UK

PYŚ	<i>Pātañjalayogaśāstra</i>
RV	<i>Rg Veda</i>
Śbh	<i>Śrāvakabhūmi</i>
SNS	<i>Samādhinirmocanasūtra</i>
SPS	<i>Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra</i>
Viv	<i>Vivaraṇa</i>
YS	<i>Yogasūtra</i>
YĀBh	<i>Yogācārabhūmiśāstra</i>
YV	<i>Yogaviṃśikā</i>

The *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*¹ (PYŚ) concludes with a description of the pinnacle of yoga practice: a state of *samādhi* called *dharmamegha*, cloud of dharma. Yet despite the structural importance of *dharmamegha* in the soteriology of Pātañjala yoga, the *śāstra* itself does not say much about this term. Where we do find *dharmamegha* discussed at some length, however, is in Buddhist *yogācāra*, and more broadly in early Mahāyāna soteriology, where it represents the apex of attainment and the superlative statehood of a bodhisattva (one whose aim is to become a buddha). Given the relative paucity of Brahmanical mentions of *dharmamegha* in the early common era, Patañjali appears to adopt this key metaphor² from a Mahāyāna context—and to revise its primary meaning from fullness to emptiness.

Within early Mahāyāna soteriology, the concept of *dharmamegha* is especially elaborated in *yogācāra*³ and particularly in various sections of Asaṅga's *Yogācārabhūmiśāstra*. We have become accustomed to discussing just one *yogaśāstra* in the classical period, that of Patañjali, but, as I have argued elsewhere,

¹ Maas has argued that the *Yogasūtra* and its commentary the *Yogasūtrabhāṣya* together comprise a single text under the title *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*, compiled and composed by Patañjali around 325–425 CE (Maas 2006, 2010, 2013, pp. 57–68). Maas's framing of the text provides a useful working hypothesis in the current academic field within which we can evaluate the *Yogasūtra* of Patañjali and its *bhāṣya*. In this paper, I follow the convention of referring to the *sūtra* and *bhāṣya* texts as one, the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*, distinguishing *sūtras* in bold. I utilize Āgāṣe's critical edition (1904), supplemented by Maas (2006) for the first *pāda*. Any unattributed translations are my own.

² In this article, I discuss metaphor within the frame of conceptual metaphor theory. Conceptual metaphor theory (part of a broader approach of cognitive metaphor theory) was initiated by Lakoff and Johnson's *Metaphors We Live By* (Lakoff and Johnson 1980), which proposed two fresh ideas: firstly that metaphors are an inherent cognitive reflex and not a linguistic one and secondly that metaphors are not only analogous but also contingent. This theory was further developed in Lakoff (1987) and Lakoff and Turner (1989). Subsequent key scholars include Gibbs (e.g. Gibbs 2017) and Kövecses (e.g. Kövecses 2005, 2006, 2015). Cognitive metaphor theory has flourished in an interdisciplinary context in recent years and expanded to include definitions of metaphor as not only conceptual, but also linguistic, socio-cultural, neural, and bodily (Kövecses 2006, p. 126).

³ I follow other scholars, such as Deleau (2006), in making a distinction between early *yogācāras* as Buddhist yoga adepts in the first centuries of the common era who were affiliated to Sarvāstivāda thought, and later *yogācāras* who by the 5th–6th centuries had become established as a discrete philosophical school, or representatives of specific doctrinal positions, within Mahāyāna Buddhism. In a variant argument, Buescher suggests that the title *Yogācāra* should refer to the earliest strands of this school of thought and the compound *Yogācāra-Vijñānavāda* to a later, more developed strand (Buescher 2008, p. 2). As Gold notes: 'There is strong reason to doubt that the term "Yogācāra" had its later, doxographic meaning—referring to a particular philosophical school—during Vasubandhu's time' (Gold 2015, p. 3).

the *Yogācārabhūmiśāstra* (YĀBh) is worth considering as another *śāstra* on yoga discipline from the same period.⁴ Since the earliest layers of the *Yogācārabhūmiśāstra* most likely predate the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*,⁵ it is reasonable to suggest that there may have been conceptual influence from yogācāra to Pātañjala yoga. In this article, I lay out four possibilities that can account for the intertextuality and the stark contrast between the ways in which these two classical *yogaśāstras*—the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* and the *Yogācārabhūmiśāstra*—employ the superlative⁶ metaphor of *dharmamegha*. Working from the premise that the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* post-dates the early layers of the YĀBh and therefore reworks the Buddhist metaphor, I demonstrate that Patañjali's *dharmamegha* can be analysed as 1. a dead or commonplace metaphor, 2. a paralogical revision for polemical effect, 3. logically concordant with Buddhist soteriology, or 4. a (by)product of literary style. I evaluate these four arguments in turn to suggest that Patañjali's strikingly empty metaphor of *dharmamegha* is largely a result of literary style and polemical revision due to doctrinal necessity.

Patañjali's *dharmamegha*

Scholars of classical yoga have long debated the meaning of the term *dharmamegha* in the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*,⁷ and the detail of the debate has been focused on what *dharma* means.⁸ One of the key reasons for the ongoing discussion is the polyvalence

⁴ For the argument that we should consider the *Yogācārabhūmiśāstra* as a classical *śāstra* on yoga discipline, see O'Brien-Kop (2017, pp. 126–130, 2018, Chap. 3).

⁵ Maas's date range for the final redaction of the PYŚ is from 325–425 CE (see footnote 1). The dating of the *Yogācārabhūmiśāstra* is complex, but most scholars now settle on a final redaction in around the fourth century (Kragh 2013, p. 26). Yet the earliest two layers or 'books', the *Śrāvaka* and the *Bodhisattva* *bhūmi*, date to the 3rd century CE, if not before. As Demiéville first outlined, two Chinese meditation manuals were rendered from a lost Sanskrit work whose title has been reconstructed as the (hypothetically titled) **Yogācārabhūmi*: the *Xiuxing dao di jing* (**Yogācārabhūmi of Saṅgharakṣa*) (T606; see Stuart 2015, 1: 15) and the *Damoduoluo chan jing* (*The Meditation (Dhyāna) Scripture [Taught] by Dharmatrāta*) (Demiéville 1951; Deleau 2006, p. 157). This later text is also referred to as the *Dharmatrāta Dhyānasūtra* (DDS). The existence of these two texts (and others) demonstrates that there was already a textual tradition of Sarvāstivāda Buddhist meditation called yogācāra by the early 2nd century CE (if we go with Saṅgharakṣa's dates) or by the late fourth to early fifth century (if we go with Buddhaseṇa's dates). For further discussion of the datings of these yogācāra texts, see Demiéville (1951), Deleau (2006), and Stuart (2015, p. 1).

⁶ In grammar, superlative is a term that indicates the highest degree of comparison between two or more objects. The comparative degree is applied in relation to two objects, whereas the superlative degree is applied to comparing more than two (Schertzer 1986, p. 37). 'Superlative' is also used in everyday expression to indicate the best of a series of possible states.

⁷ See, for example, Klostermeier (1986) and Rukmani (2007).

⁸ For a discussion of the 'dauntingly broad semantic range' of *dharma* in Indian religions, see Olivelle (1998, pp. xxxvii–xliii). In Brahmanism, *dharma* is the continuum of cosmic and social order derived from the content of Vedic injunctions and includes both an ontological and a normative dimension. In Buddhism *dharma* can mean universal law (both physical and moral), the body of Buddha's teaching (as one of the three 'jewels' or *triratna* of Buddha, *dharma*, *saṃgha*), and the constituent building blocks of reality. On the whole, most translators of the PYŚ have opted to interpret *dharma* as referring to an ontological category e.g. 'the Raincloud of [knowable] things' (Woods 1914, p. 341) or 'raincloud of essences' (Koelman 1970, p. 234). The other typical translation has been to render *dharmamegha* as

of the term *dharmamegha*. Moreover, Patañjali does not expound *dharmamegha*'s meaning in any detail, and we do not often encounter this term in Brahmanical sources. It should be added that neither do the sub-commentators of the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* shed much light on *dharmamegha* as a technical term. In combination, these factors point to *dharmamegha* being an uncommon term in Brahmanism in the early common era. I suggest that we may approach the doctrinal denotation of this term in a more fruitful way by considering what *megha* (cloud) means; it is only by elucidating the metaphoric function of *megha* in *dharmamegha* that we can arrive at a better understanding of the meaning of *dharmamegha* in this compound.

In the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*, there are two brief discussions of *dharmamegha*, which appear at the beginning and the end of the text. In itself, this positions these discussions as a structural and conceptual 'bracket' that frames the entire text. The first discussion takes place within the quintessential definition of yoga and the second discussion takes place in the concluding definition of liberation. In the first discussion, centred on *dharmameghadhyāna*, the meaning of *dharmamegha* appears to be 'virtuous or religious conduct'. In the second discussion, centred on *dharmameghasamādhi*, the primary meaning of *dharmamegha* is liberating knowledge.⁹

Dharmameghadhyāna

The first instance of *dharmamegha* occurs in the definition of *dharmameghadhyāna* (the absorption of *dharmamegha*). This appears in the *bhāṣya* to the second *sūtra*, the well-known *yogaś cittavṛttinirodhaḥ* (yoga is the cessation of mental fluctuation). The discussion explains how the mind must be sequentially purified of any vestige of the three *guṇas* (*tamas*, *rajas*, and *sattva*).¹⁰

*tad eva rajoḣśamalāpetam svarūpapratīṣṭham
sattvapuruṣānyatākhyātīmātram dharmameghadhyānopagam
bhavati. tat param prasamkhyānam ity ācakṣate dhyāyinaḥ*
(PYŚ 1.2; Maas 2006, pp. 5–6).

When that very [*sattva*] is established in its own form, without the least measure of *rajas*, being merely the cognition of the distinction between *sattva* and *puruṣa*, it is conducive to *dharmameghadhyāna*. Those versed in *dhyāna* (*dhyāyinaḥ*) call this [*dharmameghadhyāna*] the highest enumerative reflection (*prasamkhyāna*).

Footnote 8 continued

'raincloud of virtue' (e.g. Mitra 1883, p. 203; Bangali 1976, p. 110; Rukmani 1981–1989, 4: 121). Less common is the translation of *dharmamegha* to indicate teaching or body of knowledge, such as Skorupski's 'doctrine-cloud' (Skorupski 2009, p. 67).

⁹ While the ontological theory of *dharmamegha* as 'building block of reality' is certainly present in the PYŚ, I argue that it does not inform the primary meaning of *dharmamegha* in Patañjali's *dharmamegha*. For an example of *dharmamegha* as ontological unit, see the commentary to PYŚ 4.33, which moves from a characterization of *dharmamegha* as infinite knowledge into a related discussion of *dharmins*, properties. *Dharmine* is a key philosophical term to indicate the unchangeable property of a thing. See Maas (2014) for a full discussion of the transformation of *dharmamegha* theory in the PYŚ from Buddhist sources.

¹⁰ The three *guṇas* (qualities) are part of Sāṃkhya ontology and are *tamas* (density), *rajas* (dynamism), and *sattva* (purity, balance).

Table 1 PYŚ 1.2

<i>tamas</i>	<i>rajas</i>	<i>sattva</i>
Lack of <i>dharma</i>	<i>dharma</i>	<i>dharmamegha</i> = <i>prasaṃkhyāna</i>
False knowledge	Knowledge	
Attachment	Detachment	
Weakness	Strength	

The passage describes the highest level of meditative attainment in which concentration is so restricted that it perceives just one thing: the difference between the *sattva guṇa* (the ontological state of pure balance) and *puruṣa* (the state of pure consciousness). Concentration can only access this stage by being devoid of any trace of *rajas* (*tamas* long since having been eliminated). This restricted perception of the ‘difference’ also represents the state of being established in one’s own form, i. e. recognizing one’s true nature as *puruṣa*. Additionally, the passage reveals that *dharmameghadhyāna* is also called *prasaṃkhyāna* (enumerative reflection)¹¹ and confirms the enumerative aspect of *prasaṃkhyāna* in discerning discrete objects, in this case two objects (*sattva* from *puruṣa*).¹² *Dharmameghadhyāna*, then, is a meditative technique that generates the capacity to discern the ultimate ontological distinction between *prakṛti* (principle of materiality) and *puruṣa* (principle of pure consciousness).

In Patañjali’s text there is no explanation of the term *dharmamegha* itself and what it means beyond its status as a label (of a technique or stage). However, in the preceding contrasting two descriptions of a *citta* (mind) that is pierced by either *tamas* or *rajas*, *dharma* is mentioned twice. In the case of *tamas*, the four characteristics of the mind are: lack of *dharma*, false knowledge, attachment, and weakness.¹³ In the case of *rajas*, the four characteristics are *dharma*, knowledge, detachment, and strength.¹⁴ These two paradigms mirror each other. I suggest that using *dharmamegha* to denote the presence of *sattva* represents a logical progression (beyond this mirroring) (Table 1).

Notably, *dharma* is the only one of the four characteristics carried forward into the description of a mind with *sattva*. In such a framework, *dharma* continues the semantic denotation of the prior two sentences and means ‘religious conduct’ or ‘virtuous behaviour’.¹⁵ In this context, the connection to the cloud image indicates an exceptionally elevated, i.e. ideal, state of *dharma*. With regard to *dharma*, then,

¹¹ For a discussion of this translation of *prasaṃkhyāna*, see O’Brien-Kop (2017).

¹² *Sattva* here represents the subtlest and purest aspect of one’s own mind, which must also be abandoned when one realises that it belongs to *prakṛti* (the principle of materiality).

¹³ *tat tamasānuviddham, adharmājñānāvairāgyānaiśvaryopagaṃ bhavati* (PYŚ 1.2; Maas 2006, pp. 4–5).

¹⁴ *tad eva prakṣīṇamohāvaraṇaṃ sarvataḥ pradyotamānaṃ, rajomātrayānuviddham, dharmājñānavairāgyaiśvaryopagaṃ bhavati* (PYŚ 1.2; Maas 2006, p. 5).

¹⁵ With regard to the individual mind, *dharma* most appropriately refers to virtuous attitude or religious conduct and not to *dharma* as ‘ontological unit’ or ‘body of teachings’, the other two most common meanings for *dharma*. The inclusion of *dharma* in a list of other human and mental qualities (e.g. knowledge, detachment, strength) further reinforces that this is how we should read it in this context.

citta has three expressions, which match the three *guṇas*: lack of *dharma* (*tamas*), presence of *dharma* (*rajas*), and exceptional *dharma* (cloud of *dharma*) that surpasses convention (*sattva*).

Dharmameghasamādhi

Patañjali's second reference to *dharmamegha* occurs at the end of the *śāstra*, where it is discussed in more detail.¹⁶ This description is of the highest attainment of yogic concentration, or *dharmameghasamādhi* (the concentration of the cloud of *dharma*). Here, we learn that *dharmameghasamādhi* is equivalent to the *samādhi* that is without seed of *saṃskāra* (mental imprint):

***prasamkhyāne 'py akusīdasya sarvathā vivekakhyāter dharmameghaḥ samādhiḥ* ||**

yadāyaṃ brāhmaṇaḥ prasamkhyāne 'py akusīdas tato 'pi na kiṃcit prārthayate. tatrāpi viraktasya sarvathā vivekakhyātir eva bhavatīti saṃskārabhijakṣayān nāsyā pratyayāntarāṇy utpadyante. tadāsyā dharmamegho nāma samādhir bhavati (PYŚ 4.29; Āgāśe 1904, p. 202)

For one who is without investment even in enumerative reflection (*prasamkhyāna*), *dharmameghasamādhi* arises from complete discriminating discernment (*vivekakhyāti*).

When this Brahmin is without investment even in enumerative reflection, then he does not strive whatsoever. Therefore one who is completely devoid of attachment thereto [to *prasamkhyāna*] has only discriminating discernment. Because of the destruction of the seed of *saṃskāra*, no other ideations arise. Then, there arises the *samādhi* that is called *dharmamegha*.

We previously encountered the state of seedless concentration; *nirbīja samādhi* was explained at PYŚ 1.51. Hence, the equivalence in the above passage would appear to confirm that *dharmameghasamādhi* and *nirbīja samādhi* are synonyms. As I have noted, the opening of the PYŚ presents *dharmameghadhyāna* as equivalent to *prasamkhyāna* (enumerative reflection). Now, it is explained that only when one abandons this technique of *prasamkhyāna* (the act of perceiving the difference between *sattva* and *puruṣa*, i.e. *dharmameghadhyāna*), can one attain the ultimate state of *dharmameghasamādhi*. We have, then, a simple progression that can be expressed in two ways: to say that *prasamkhyāna* leads to *nirbīja samādhi* is equivalent to saying that *dharmameghadhyāna* leads to *dharmameghasamādhi*.¹⁷ The state of *dharmameghasamādhi* is further characterized as a state of infinite knowledge:

***tadā sarvāvaraṇaṃālāpetasya jñānasyānanyāḥ jñeyam alpam* ||** (PYŚ 4.31; Āgāśe 1904, p. 203).

Then for one who is free from the impurity of all obscuration due to infinite knowledge, that which is to be known is little.

¹⁶ PYŚ 4.29; 4.31-32.

¹⁷ The progression of *dharmamegha* from a state of *dhyāna* to one of *samādhi* represents the typical sequence from absorption to concentration, such as we see in both Pātañjala and Buddhist schemes of meditation.

This description of the cloud of *dharmamegha* as infinite knowledge supports the reading of *dharmamegha* in this instance as ‘body of teaching/doctrine’. Additionally, *dharmameghasamādhi* is also a state in which change and transformation are brought to a halt (PYŚ 4.32).¹⁸ If, as we are told in PYŚ 1.1, yoga is *samādhi*, then the superlative state of yoga is *dharmameghasamādhi*. This is a liberated state of cessation.

From these two accounts of *dharmamegha* in the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*, we can assert that *dharmamegha* can be both ethical-ontological (the virtuous condition of *sattvaguṇa*) and epistemological (the condition of unlimited knowledge) and that *dharmameghasamādhi* is a superlative state of cessation.

Dharmamegha in Buddhist Sources

In contrast to the dearth of sources for the term *dharmamegha* in Brahmanical texts,¹⁹ there is an abundance of references in Buddhist literature. In Buddhism, the abstract concept of *dharmamegha* is frequently represented via metaphors. For example, in the late-canonical *Buddhavaṃsa* (1st–2nd century BCE) we are told how the future Buddha will enlighten all beings. This is explained with three metaphors: the Dhamma-ship, the Dhamma-mirror, and the Dhamma-medicine (Collins 2010, p. 183). Each of these metaphors contains dense clusters of association, e.g. the ship as a vehicle for safe passage, the mirror as reflecting self-knowledge and awareness, and medicine as a healing modality. *Dharmamegha* is perhaps just one of the myriad metaphors in Buddhism that attempt to scaffold the meaning of terms like *dharmamegha*. Nonetheless, whatever its origins, *dharmamegha* was picked up and amplified in a certain strand of Mahāyāna literature.

¹⁸ *tataḥ kṛtārthānāṃ parīṇāmakramasamāptir guṇānāṃ* || *tasya dharmameghasyodayāt kṛtārthānāṃ guṇānāṃ parīṇāmakramāḥ parisamāpyate* / *na hi kṛtabhogāpavargāḥ parisamāptakramāḥ kṣaṇam apy avasthātum utsahante* (PYŚ 4.32; Āgāṣe 1904, p. 204). **Then the guṇas have accomplished their purpose when the sequence of transformation is fully completed.** Due to the emergence of the cloud of *dharmamegha*, the *guṇas* have accomplished their purpose and the sequence of change is fully completed, for [when] experience and emancipation are done, the sequences complete, they [the *guṇas*] cannot bear to continue for even a moment.⁹

¹⁹ Although cloud images are common in the *Mahābhārata*, the term *dharmamegha* does not appear, and the contexts of the cloud metaphor can be general and varied. The verses MB 12.304.18–27 explain the characteristics of the yoga adept in terms of similes. The first two are familiar because we encounter them in the PYŚ, the lamp and the cloud: *nivāte tu yathā dīpo jvalet snehasamanvitaḥ* / *niścālordhvaśikhas tadvad yuktam āhur manīṣiṇaḥ* / *pāṣāṇa iva meghoṭthair yathā bindubhir āhataḥ* / *nālaṃ cālayitum śakyas tathā yuktasya lakṣaṇam* (MB 12.304.19–20; Belvalkar 1954, Vol 15: 1680). ‘But as a lamp in a windless place, filled with oil, will burn with the motionless up-rising flame, in the same way, the wise describe the disciplined (Yoga-adept). As a stone, struck by water-drops coming from a cloud, cannot be disturbed, such is the mark of the disciplined (Yoga-adept)’ (trs. Edgerton 1965, p. 327). This raincloud image is not one of *dharmamegha*, but rather serves a different function to illustrate the non-responsive nature of a stone-like yogin.

Dhammamegha in Pāli Sources

Some of the earliest detailed discussions of *dhammamegha* in the Pāli canon are to be found in the *Apadāna* and the *Buddhavaṃsa*, both containing biographical stories about the Buddha.²⁰ For example, the *Apadāna*²¹ states:

*dhammameghena vassante sabbe hontu anāsavaṃ
ye'tha pacchimakā sattā sotāpannā bhavantu te*
(*Apadāna*, Buddhāpadānam 68; Lilley 1925–1927, Part 1: 5)
While the *dharmamegha* rains, may all contaminations cease; may [people]
live according to their perfections, may they become stream-enterers.

In the *Buddhavaṃsa*, the Buddha is described both as being the agency of *dhammamegha* and as having a causative relationship to *dhammamegha*. As the agency of the cloud, the Buddha rains the showers of *dharma*:

*so pi patvāna sambodhiṃ santārento sadevakaṃ
abhivassi dhammameghena nibbāpento sadevakaṃ*
(Bv 17.2; Jayawickrama 1974, p. 68)

²⁰ This is according to the *Pāli Tipiṭakam Concordance* (Woodward et al. 1973, Vol 2: 413). These texts both occur in the *Khuddaka Nikāya*, the fifth and last division of the *Sutta Piṭaka*.

²¹ The *Apadāna* also contains an interesting discussion of *dhammamegha* in relation to procreative fertility: *Yathāpi padumaṃ nāma sūraraṃsena pupphati / tath'; evāhaṃ mahāvīra buddharaṃsena pupphito. // Yathā balākayonimhi na vijjati pumā sadā / meggesu gajjamānesu gabbhaṃ gaṇhanti tā sadā. // Ciraṃ pi gabbhaṃ dhārenti yāva megho na gajjati / bhārato parimuccanti yadā megho pavassati. // Padumuttarabuddhassa dhammameghena gajjato / saddena dhammameghassa dhammagabbhaṃ agaṇhi'haṃ. // Satasahassaṃ upādāya puññagabbhaṃ dhareṃ ahaṃ / nappamuccāmi bhārato dhammamegho na gajjati. // Yadā tuvaṃ Sakyamuni ramme Kapilavatthave / gajjasi dhammameghena bhārato parimucc' ahaṃ. // Suññataṃ animittaṃ ca tathāpaṇihitaṃ pi ca / caturo ca phale sabbe dhamme 'va vijaṭṭh' ahaṃ. //* (*Apadāna*, Therāpadāna 1.6.70–76; Lilley 1925–1927, Part 1: 42) 'And just as a lotus flower blooms due to the rays of the sun, so too do I, O Great Hero, bloom because of the Buddha-rays. Just as male birds are not always found mating with the female cranes [but only] when the clouds do rumble do they take them to their wombs, and for much time they stay pregnant—as long as the clouds don't thunder—then they are freed from that burden when the clouds are raining [again], [so] when the Dhamma-cloud thundered of Padumuttara Buddha, due to that Dhamma-cloud's loud sound I [then] conceived a Dhamma-womb. Serving for a hundred thousand [aeons] I bore that merit-fetus. I was not freed from that burden; the Dhamma-cloud did not thunder. But when you, Sage of the Śākyas did thunder from your Dhamma-cloud in lovely Kapilavastu, I was set free from that burden. [Then] I explained the whole Teaching and also its four fruits, which are: emptiness, the absence of marks, suchness, intentionality' (trs. Walters 2017, pp. 87–88). The association between *dhammamegha* and Padumuttara, the 10th of the 28 Buddhas (Malalasekera 1938, II: 136), is reinforced in Chapter Four: *Vāsavaṃ viya vassantaṃ dhammameghaṃ anāsavaṃ / sārādādiccasadisam raṃsijālākulaṃ jinam* (*Apadāna*, Therī-Apadāna 2.17.98; Lilley 1925–1927, Part 2: 537). 'The Victor, like autumnal son, surrounded by garlands of rays, without constraints, that Dhamma-cloud rained forth like the king of the gods' (trs. Walters 2017, p. 1034). There is one further discussion of *dhammamegha*, again in relation to Padumuttara: *Guṇānaṃ āyati bhūto ratanānaṃ va sāgaro / pajjunno pi va bhūtāni dhammameghena vassati* (*Apadāna*, Therāpadāna 54.530.4; Lilley 1925–1927, Part 2: 468), 'Like the ocean for gems, he is the future for the virtuous; like a rain-cloud for living things, he rains by the cloud of Teaching' (trs. Walters 2017, p. 887). Since both Padumuttara and Paduma (the eighth of the twenty-four Buddhas; Malalasekera 1938, II: 131) are described as engendering a shower of lotuses, it is not clear why they should be directly connected with the rain of *dhammamegha*, other than symbolically.

After he had attained Self-Awakening and was causing the world with the devas to cross over, he rained down from the cloud of Dhamma making the world with the devas cool (trs. Horner 1975, p. 67).

In contrast, the Buddha's causative relation to the rain of *dharma* is outlined here:

*dhammameghaṃ pavassetvā temayitvā sadevake
khemantaṃ pāpayitvāna nibbuto so sasāvako*
(Bv 21.26; Jayawickrama 1974, p. 81)

*Having made the cloud of Dhamma rain down moistening the world
with the devas* (Bv 21.26; trs. Horner 1975, p. 80) [author's italics].

Beyond the Pāli canon, *dhammamegha* appears in relation to yoga in the 1st–2nd century CE *Milindapañha*, in which the Indo-Greek king Menander poses questions about Buddhism. The example of *dhammamegha* appears in a long list of similes self-consciously presented to construct the paradigms of right behaviour for the earnest yogin. Using the structure of simile, the text lists five qualities of the cloud (*megha*) that the *yogin yogāvacara* is said to possess. The cloud is also understood to be a raincloud, and the five qualities of rain—settling, cooling, nurturing, protective, and abundant—are mapped to the yogin. The passage explains that *dharmamegha* is a fruit of *yogācāra* (Pāli: *yogāvacara*), or yoga discipline, and its function is to provide sustenance and nourishment to the world.

‘Revered Nāgasena, when you say five qualities of the rain-cloud must be adopted, which are these five qualities that must be adopted?’

‘As, sire, the rain-cloud allays dust and dirt that are arising, even so, sire, the yogin, the earnest student of yoga must allay the dust and dirt of the defilements that are arising. This, sire, is the first quality of the rain-cloud that must be adopted.

And again, sire, the rain-cloud cools the heat of the earth; even so, sire, the yogin, the earnest student of yoga must cool the world with the devas by the meditation of loving-kindness. This, sire, is the second quality of the rain-cloud that must be adopted.

And again, sire, the rain-cloud makes all seeds grow; even so, sire, the yogin, the earnest student of yoga, having in all creatures generated faith, should sow the seed of faith for (achieving) the three attainments: the deva-like and the human attainments and the attainment of the bliss of nibbāna, the ultimate goal. This, sire, is the third quality of the rain-cloud that must be adopted.

And again, sire, a rain-cloud, arising in due season, preserves the base of the *dharaṇīruha* (tree), the grasses, trees, creepers, bushes, medicinal plants and forest-trees; even so, sire, the yogin, the earnest student of yoga, having produced careful attention must, by means of that careful attention, preserve the Dhamma of recluses, so that all skilled states are rooted in careful attention. This, sire, is the fourth quality of the rain-cloud that must be adopted.

And again, sire, the rain-cloud in raining down fills rivers, reservoirs, lotus-ponds and gullies, crevices, lakes, water-pools and wells with showers of water; even so, sire, the yogin, the earnest student of yoga, having rained down

the rain-cloud of Dhamma for the mastery of the tradition, should perfect the mind (of others) for the spiritual realisations they are longing for. This, sire, is the fifth quality of the rain-cloud that must be adopted. And this, sire, was said by the Elder Sāriputta, the General under Dhamma:

“Seeing folk capable of being awakened
Even be they a hundred or a thousand yojanas (distant),
Approaching them at the right moment
The Great Sage awakens them”
(MP 7.56; trs. Horner 1963–1964, Vol 2: 291–292).²²

In comparison to the previous canonical examples, *dhammamegha* here is associated not with the Buddha, but with the agency of ‘the earnest yogin’ who takes centre-stage in book seven of the *Milindapañha*.²³ The rich detail provided by this simile is worth noting because in a simile the process of domain-mapping (transferring qualities) from source to target²⁴ is more evident than in a metaphor,

²² *Yathā, mahārāja, meghe uppannaṃ rajojallaṃ vūpasameti, evameva kho, mahārāja yoginā yogāvacarena uppannaṃ kilesarajojallaṃ vūpasametabbaṃ. Idam, mahārāja, meghassa paṭhamam aṅgaṃ gahetabbaṃ. Puna ca paraṃ, mahārāja, meghe pathaviyā uṇhaṃ nibbāpeti, evam eva kho, mahārāja yoginā yogāvacarena mettābhāvanāya sadevako loko nibbāpetabbo. Idam, mahārāja, meghassa dutiyaṃ aṅgaṃ gahetabbaṃ. Puna ca paraṃ, mahārāja meghe sabbabījāni virūhāpeti evam eva kho mahārāja yoginā yogāvacarena sabbasattānaṃ saddhaṃ uppādetvā taṃ saddhābijaṃ tīsu sampattisu ropetabbaṃ, dibbamānusiṅṇasū sampattisu yāva paramatthanibbānasukhasampatti. Idam maharaja meghassa tatiyaṃ aṅgaṃ gahetabbaṃ. Puna ca paraṃ maharaja meghe ututo samutṭhahitvā dharāṇita-laruhe tīṇarukkhalatāgumbaosaḍḍhivaṇappatayo parirakkhati evam eva kho maharaja yoginā yogāvacarena yoniso manasikāraṃ nibbattetvā tena yoniso manasikārena samaṇadhammo parirakkhitabbo, yoniso manasikāramūlā sabbe kusālā dhammā. Idam mahārāja meghassa catutthaṃ aṅgaṃ gahetabbaṃ. Puna ca paraṃ mahārāja meghe vassamāno naḍi tālākāpokkharāṇiyo kandara-padarasarasobhahaudapānāni ca paripūreti udakadhārāhi evam eva kho mahārāja yoginā yogāvacarena āgamapariyattiyā dhammameghamabhivassayitvā adhigamakāmānaṃ mānaṣaṃ paripūrayitabbaṃ* (MP; Trenckner 1962, pp. 410–411).

²³ Klostermeier also translated this passage in a key article that highlighted Buddhist textual sources for the image of the cloud within the context of *yogalyogācāra*: ‘1. As the rain-cloud settles the dust on the road, so the *yogin*, by means of his yoga practice, should settle the dust of afflictions (*kilesarajojallaṃ*). 2. As the rain-cloud allays the heat of summer, so the *yogin*, through his practice of friendliness (*mettābhāva*), should reduce the heat of the whole world (*nibbāpetabo*). 3. As the rain-cloud makes all kinds of plants grow, so the *yogin* should make faith (*saddhā*) arise and grow. 4. As the rain-cloud affords protection in the hot season to vegetation, so the *yogin*, by virtue of mindfulness (*manasikāra*), should protect the *samaṇadhamma*. 5. As the rain-cloud, when it opens up, fills brooks and streams and wells and lakes, so the *yogin*, by virtue of his yoga life (*yogāvacarena*) well-grounded in the scriptures (*āgamapariyattiyā*), should open the ‘raincloud of dharma’ (*dhammamegha*) and make it pour down fulfillment to the minds of those who are desirous of learning’ (trs. Klostermeier 1986, pp. 257–258). However, in his translation of the term *dharma*, Klostermeier comes down on the side of *dharma* as ontological factor. Making an anachronistic leap, he translates *megha* as ‘field’ in the sense of modern physics: ‘*Dhammamegha samādhi* would then be a condition in which the dharmas, which on a lower level of consciousness have been perceived as differentiated into a great number of specific dharmas, now are perceived in their (unified) dharma-character’ (Klostermeier 1986, p. 260). However, in turning *megha* (cloud) into a spatial ‘field’ to make it match an ontological interpretation of *dharma*, Klostermeier does the term an injustice and overlooks its metaphoric importance for Patañjali. Wujastyk (2018) also discusses Klostermaier’s work.

²⁴ Lakoff and Johnson introduced the idea that metaphor is produced by ‘domain-mapping’. This is the cognitive process by which one area of life (a domain) is conceptualized in the terms of another, with the properties transferred from one domain to the other (Lakoff and Johnson 1980). Thus two unconnected

which is a more compressed linguistic and cognitive form. When we review the literary use of this metaphor further along, we must consider that the qualities so explicitly outlined in this simile are not always so explicit in a metaphor.²⁵

Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra and Daśabhūmikasūtra

Despite the early context for *dhammamegha* in Pāli sources, the most well-known discussions of *dhammamegha* in Buddhist literature are in the early Mahāyāna *sūtras*, particularly the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra* and the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*, both dated to the early centuries CE.

The *Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra* (SPS) is often identified as the first *sūtra* text of the Mahāyāna corpus, proclaiming, as it does, the new vehicle. The text was produced in phases from circa 1st century BCE to 3rd century CE, and among the earliest layers of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra* are the verse sections in Chapter Five.²⁶ Chapter Five, which deals with medicinal herbs (*‘Oṣadhī-parivartō nāma pañcamah’*), contains extraordinarily detailed descriptions of the rain of true dharma. Although the compound *dhammamegha* does not itself appear in this chapter, this *sūtra* offers the first *extended* association of the Buddha with a raincloud of dharma.

dharma-rājā ahaṃ loka utpanno bhava-mardanaḥ |
dharmaṃ bhāṣāmi sattvānāṃ adhimuktiṃ vijāniya || 1 [...]
yathā ‘pi Kāśyapā meghe loka-dhātūya unnataḥ |
sarvam onahatī cāpi chādayanto vasaṃdharām || 5
so ca vārisya saṃpūrṇo vidyun-mālī mahā ‘mbudaḥ |
nirṇādayanta śabdena harṣayet sarva-dehinaḥ || 6
emeva buddho ‘pi ha loka Kāśyapa
utpadyate vāri-dharo va loka || [16ab]

(SPS 5.vv1, 5–6, 16; Wogihara and Tsuchida 1934, pp. 117–118).

The King of Dharma I am, who arose in the world to crush becoming;

Dharma I teach to beings, after I have discerned their dispositions.

It is like a great cloud which rises above the earth,

Footnote 24 continued

spheres of life are drawn together. People construct concepts, particularly abstract ones, by mapping their knowledge of more concrete domains to more abstract domains. The process of connecting two domains in metaphor can be partially accounted for by similarity. Using the stock example of ‘Achilles is a lion’, the two domains are: ‘the specific man called Achilles’ and ‘a lion’. In the domain-mapping, the qualities of the source domain (the lion) are ‘transferred’ or ‘mapped’ to the target domain (Achilles), so that, although it is not explicitly stated, Achilles is understood in the terms of a lion: a hunter, powerful, fierce, a wild creature, with a mane, deadly, etc. However, domains are frequently connected by convention rather than inherent likeness. One example of this is mapping attributes from the domain of agricultural cultivation to the more abstract domain of ‘spiritual cultivation’—there is little analogical basis for connecting these two domains.

²⁵ It is also important to note that passages similar to this appear elsewhere in the Pāli canon, although not with reference to *dhammamegha* (e.g. *Samyutta Nikāya* ii 32).

²⁶ The fifth chapter contains both prose and verse sections, both of which describe the cloud of dharma. One point to note is that the verse sections are the earliest layers of the text, dated to the beginning of the first millennium and therefore predating Patañjali’s *sūtrabhāṣya*.

Which covers up everything and overshadows the firmament,
 And this great cloud, filled with water, wreathed with lightning,
 Resounds with thunder, and refreshes all the creatures.
 Just so, O Kasyapa, the Buddha also
 Arises in this world just like a rain-cloud (trs. Conze 1954, pp. 139–140).

The emphasis and repetition of the association between the Buddha and the raincloud over the course of this chapter is a new statement of doctrine. But it is not yet formulaic or standardised; in these verses the most frequent word used for cloud is *megha*, also giving rise to *mahāmegha* or 'great cloud'. However, other terms for (rain)cloud are also used: *mahā'mbudaḥ* (Wogihara and Tsuchida 1934, p. 117, v6a), *vāridhara* (Wogihara and Tsuchida 1934, p. 118, v16b), and *varṣam* (Wogihara and Tsuchida 1934, p. 120, v26d and 121, v36a). Interestingly, when *varṣam* appears, it is in the compound *dharmavarṣam*, and so the closest we get to *dharmamegha* in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra* is *dharmavarṣam*. (I will return to this point below).

One of the central features of this rain of *dharma* is that it nourishes all life equally:

saṃtarpayāmi imu sarva-lokaṃ
megho va vāriṃ sama muñcamānaḥ |
 (SPS 5.v24; Wogihara and Tsuchida 1934, p. 118)
 I refresh this entire world
 Like a cloud which releases its rain evenly for all
 (trs. Conze 1954, p. 140).

This assertion is fundamental to the new Mahāyāna doctrine of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra*. The text has to justify why the true teaching (or the new vehicle) has only been revealed now and not previously—and, in order to do so, the text locates agency on the part of the disciples and not on the part of the Buddha himself. The argument proceeds thus: even though rain falls equally on seeds, some seeds turn into flowers and some into trees—it depends upon the capacity of the seed itself.

mamāpi co varṣatu dharma-varṣam
loko hy ayaṃ tarpitu bhoti sarvaḥ |
yathā-balaṃ cānuvicintayanti
subhāṣitaṃ eka-rasaṃ pi dharmam ||
trṇa-gulmakā vā yatha varṣamāṇe
madhyā pi vā oṣadhiyo yathaiva |
drumā pi vā ta ca mahā-drumā vā
yatha śobhayante daśa-dikṣu sarve ||
īyaṃ sadā loka-hitāya dharmatā
tarpeti dharmen' imu sarva-lokaṃ |
saṃtarpitaś cāpy atha sarva-lokaḥ
pramuñcate oṣadhi puṣpakāni ||
 (SPS 5.vv36–38; Wogihara and Tsuchida 1934, p. 121)
 When I rain down the rain of the Dharma,

Then all this world is well refreshed.
 Each one according to their power takes to heart
 This well-preached Dharma, one in taste.
 As when it rains the shrubs and grasses,
 The bushes and the smaller plants,
 The trees and also the great woods
 Are all made splendid in the ten regions;
 So the nature of Dharma always exists for the weal of the world,
 And it refreshes by this Dharma the entire world.
 And then, refreshed, just like the plants,
 The world will burst forth into blossoms (trs. Conze 1954, p. 140).

This indicates that the true dharma has been available all along, but that a lack in the capacity of the disciples resulted in the lack of yield. The image of this ‘just rain of dharma’ provided by the Buddha is central to the text’s strategies of validation for its new doctrine.

The other key source in early Mahāyāna for the raincloud of dharma metaphor is the *Daśabhūmikasūtra* (DBS).²⁷ Although not explicitly a text about yoga, the *Daśabhūmikasūtra* employs the discourse of yoga. This text describes the ten stages or *bhūmis*²⁸ of attainment in the *bodhisattva* path to liberation, and the tenth stage, the *bodhisattvabhūmi*, is also called *dharmameghabhūmi* (the stage of the cloud of dharma). At the second level of the *daśabhūmis*, we are told about the aim of yoga:

*tata uttarataraṃ paṇṇāpariśodhitāḥ sarvākārapariśodhitavād yāvad daśabalabal-
 atvāya sarvabuddhadharmasamudāgamāya saṃvartante tasmāt tarhy asmābhiḥ
 samābhīrṇhāre sarvākārapariśodhanābhīrṇhāra eva yogah karaṇīyah*
 (DBS 2P; Rahder 1926, p. 26).

They [the adepts] are even more highly purified than that as a result of being purified of all forms when they approach full knowledge of every *buddha-dharma*, the power of the ten *balas*. As a result of that, then, it is only when total realization (*samābhīrṇhāra*),²⁹ happens, i.e. realization of the purification of all forms, that we should practise yoga.

Unlike in the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*, we do not find discussions of *dharmameghadhyaṇa* or *dharmameghasamādhi*, but rather *dharmameghabhūmi*.

²⁷ Although the *Daśabhūmikasūtra* was initially an independent text, it was later absorbed into a large compilation, the *Avataṃsakasūtra* (early centuries CE). It was first translated into Chinese by Dharmarakṣa in the 3rd century CE (Schmithausen 2016, p. 401). Although the ten stages (*daśabhūmi*) are also represented in other Mahāyāna texts such as the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* (which also discusses *dharmamegha*) and the *Sūtraṅgasūtra*, this present article focuses on the more obvious line of transmission from the *Daśabhūmikasūtra* to the *Yogācārabhūmiśāstra*, discussed further along and in footnote 31.

²⁸ The ten *bhūmis* are: *pramuditā*, *vimalā*, *prabhākarī*, *arciṣmatī*, *sudurjayā*, *abhimukhī*, *dūraṃgamā*, *acalā*, *sādhumatī*, *dharmameghā*. For an elucidation of the ten stages, see Bagchi (1967, pp. 1–23).

²⁹ According to Edgerton’s Buddhist-Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary, *abhinirhāra* means accomplishment, production or realization, often in relation to the mind, self, vows, etc. (Edgerton 1953). I have been unable to discern the technical meaning of the prefix *sama-* in relation to *abhinirhāra* and suggest ‘total’. For a brief discussion of *abhinirhāra*, see Deleanu (2006, 2: 477 fn31).

Dharmamegha represents the 10th perfection (*pāramitā*), which is perfection of knowledge (*jñānapāramitā*). This *bhūmi*, the tenth stage in the *bodhisattva* path,³⁰ is also called the *abhiṣekabhūmi*, the level of anointment or coronation. The *bodhisattva* is like an ocean that can soak up the infinite amount of knowledge that rains down like a deluge from a raincloud.

tadyathāpi nāma bho jinaputrāḥ sāgaraṇāgarājameghavisṛṣṭo mahān apskandho na sukaro 'nyena pṛthivīpradeśena soḍhuṃ vā sampratyeṣituṃ vā svīkartuṃ vā saṃdhārayituṃ vā anyatra mahāsamudrāt / evam eva bho jinaputrā ye te tathāgatānāṃ bhagavatāṃ guhyānupraveśā yad uta mahādharmāvabhāsā mahādharmālokā mahādharmameghās te na sukarāḥ sarvasatvaiḥ sarvaśrāvakapratyekabuddhaiḥ prathamāṃ bhūmim upādāya yāvan navamībhūmipratīṣṭhitair api bodhisattvais tān bodhisatvo 'syāṃ dharmameghāyāṃ bodhisattvabhūmau sthitaḥ sarvān saḥate sampratīcchati svīkaroti saṃdhārayati (DBS 10H; Rahder 1926, p. 89)

Oh you jinaputras, just as a great mass of water that is poured from a cloud of the ocean serpent-king is not easily borne, desired, claimed and drawn in by any other region of earth than the great ocean, thus, oh jinaputras, those who are entered in the secret of the divine buddhas – which is the revelation of the great dharma, the light of the great dharma, the cloud of the great dharma – this is not easily done by all beings, by all who are *śrāvaka* and *pratyekabuddha*, or even by all *bodhisattvas* established in the first stage up to the ninth stage. It is the *bodhisattvas* established in this *bodhisattva* stage called *dharmamegha* who bear, desire, get and possess all of it.

In the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*, then, *dharmameghabhūmi* is the pinnacle of the path of practice for a *bodhisattva*. It represents innumerable *samādhis*, infinite knowledge, and abundant growth.

Dharmameghabhūmi in the Yogācārabhūmiśāstra

The term *dharmamegha* is also discussed in two sections of the *Yogācārabhūmiśāstra*: in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* (BoBh) and in the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* (SNS). I will discuss the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* here, and the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* in a section further along. The *Bodhisattvabhūmi* draws on the *Daśabhūmikasūtra* for its tenfold scheme.³¹ At *dharmameghabhūmi*, the *bodhisattva* becomes omniscient like a cloud

³⁰ Elsewhere, in the *Ratnameghasūtra* it is suggested that a *bodhisattva* may need to be a *yogācāra*, practitioner of yoga discipline. The *Ratnameghasūtra* contains information on how a *bodhisattva* should practice ascetic activity. Silk translates this passage from the Tibetan: ‘if people are endowed with ten qualities they are noble *bodhisattvas* [...] [if they] are *yogācāras* who abundantly contemplate emptiness’ (Silk 2000, p. 297). Schopen notes that although this text was only translated into Chinese in the 6th century CE, it ‘is quoted three times in the *Sūtrasamuccaya* which might be by Nāgārjuna’ around the 2nd century (Schopen 2006, p. 346).

³¹ The *Bodhisattvabhūmi* states this explicitly in the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*: *vistarānirdeśataḥ punar yathāśūtram eva daśabhūmike pramuditabhūminirdeśam ārabhya. yāś ca daśabhūmike sūtre daśa bodhisattvabhūmayāḥ* (BoBh; Wogihara 1930–1936, p. 332, line 21). ‘Moreover, the elaborated teaching according to the sūtra is in the *Daśabhūmika*, commencing with the instruction on the stage of joy. And those ten [stages] in the *Daśabhūmika Sūtra* are those of the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*.’

that produces rain to provide sustenance to the world.

paripūrnabodhisattvamārgaḥ suparipūrṇa-bodhisambhāraś ca sa bodhisattvaḥ tathāgatānām aṃtikād dharmameghabhūtām atyudārām duḥśahām tadanyaiḥ sarvasattvais saddharmavṛṣṭim sampratīcchati / mahāmeghabhūtaś ca svayam anabhisambuddhabodhir abhisambuddhabodhiś ca aprameyānām sattvānām saddharma-vṛṣṭyā nirupamayā kleśarajāmsi praśamayati / vicitrāṇi ca kuśalamūlaśasyāni virohayati vivardhayati pācayati tasyām bhūmāv avasthitaḥ / tasmāt sā bhūmir dharmameghety ucyate / tenaiva cārthena paramo vihāro draṣṭavyaḥ (BoBh 2.4.12; Wogihara 1930–1936, pp. 354–355)

The bodhisattva who has completed the bodhisattva path and fulfilled all requisites for awakening, [being] near the *tathāgatas*, immediately desires a rain of true dharma, grand and unbearable for all beings other than him, being the cloud of dharma. That [bodhisattva] consists of a great cloud [that] automatically [contains both] the awakening by non-enlightenment and the awakening by enlightenment and causes to be settled the particles of dust of the *kleśas* of countless beings by means of an incomparable rain of true dharma. While established in this stage [ground], he causes the diverse virtuous roots of grain [corn] to sprout, grow and mature. This is the reason why this stage is called *dharmamegha*. And it is only by means of this that the supreme abode is experienced.

The bodhisattva enters into deeper meditation, acquiring endless *samādhis* and limitless powers, and overcomes even the subtlest trace of the *kleśas* (mental afflictions). The cloud has a beneficial function in that it produces growth, proliferation and propagation of virtue.³²

In structure, the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* is similar to another text that is generally attributed to Asaṅga, the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāraśāstra* (MSA).³³ This treatise, which provides an overview of the yogācāra frame and the path of the bodhisattva, also refers to *dharmamegha*, both in the verses themselves and in the commentary (which may have been authored by Vasubandhu). In the commentary to *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāraśāstra* 11.46, *dharmamegha* denotes mastery over action attained by the bodhisattva.³⁴ In Chapter 20, one of two chapters outlining signs of practice and attainment, *dharmamegha* is the tenth stage of the bodhisattva's progress and has a technical meaning of 'pervasion' 'because it is like a raincloud in the sky of the Dharma, pervading both (concentrations and retentions)' (MSA 20.38cd; trs. Jamspal et al. 2004, p. 332).³⁵ The commentary to this verse adds: "pervading both" means that because the Dharma—permeating the foundational

³² *Dharmamegha* also appears as one part of a threefold cluster called *mahādharma* which enfolds *mahādharma* along with two other dharma complexes: *mahādharma* (the revelation of the great dharma), *mahādharma* (the light of the great dharma) and *mahādharma* (the cloud of the great dharma).

³³ For a summary of the complex debates on whether Asaṅga or Maitreya(-nātha) authored the verses in this text, as well as the theories of composition of the commentary, see Sakuma (2013, esp 335–336 fn11, 12).

³⁴ *dharmameghāyāṃ karmāṇyabhiññakarmaṇāmavyāghātāt* (Lévi 1907, p. 66).

³⁵ *dharmameghā dvayavyāpter dharmākāśasya meghavat* (Lévi 1907, p. 183).

(consciousness), and attained by means of the doors of concentrations and retentions —is like a raincloud (pervading) the sky-like (Dharma-realm)' (trs. Jamspal et al. 2004, p. 332).³⁶

Vedic Forerunners of the Cloud of *Dharma*

Despite the proliferation of *dharmamegha* in Buddhist sources, the vibrant elemental imagery of the raincloud is not, of course, unique to the Buddhist conceptual sphere. In Vedic ritual, rainfall is one of the frequently cited objectives of the fire sacrifice. Furthermore, the fire of *tapas* produces power in the ascetic, 'which may manifest itself as a sexual and fecundating energy which when released generates rainfall, fertile fields, and biological offspring' (Kaelber 1989, p. 144).³⁷ The Vedic deities such as Soma, Agni, Varuṇa and Indra were all closely associated with water. As Proferes states: 'these gods reside in water, generate rain, or set the cosmic stream free to flow to earth for the benefit of humankind' (Proferes 2007, p. 78). In its description of the anointing or *abhiṣeka* of the king, the *Ṛg Veda* carries the image of the unction waters as a raincloud (*abhravarṣa*, lit. 'cloud-rain') of *soma* pouring down on earth, streaming with light and splendour.

ete somā ati vārāṇy avyā
divyā na kośāso abhravarṣāḥ,
vṛthā samudraṃ sindhavo na nīcīḥ
sutāso abhi kalaśām asṛgran (RV 9.88.6)

These pressed soma juices, like heavenly buckets of cloud-rain, streamed at will through the heavenly wool strainer into the vessels like rivers downwards to the sea (cited and trs. Proferes 2007, p. 94).

Water forms a central part of the rituals of *abhiṣeka*, consecration in the form of the sprinkling of liquids and water (Davidson 2002, p. 123; Proferes 2007).³⁸ Indeed, as Proferes has argued, royal power and investiture provides a key paradigm for early Indic soteriology (Proferes 2007).³⁹ Significantly, a synonym for *dharmameghabhūmi* in the *Daśabhūmikasūtra* is *abhiṣekabhūmi*. The *abhiṣekabhūmi* was used to explain the Buddha as the Dharmarāja (king of *dharma*) in the final birth of a *bodhisattva*.⁴⁰ One can suggest that archaic Vedic metaphors, such as the

³⁶ Jamspal et al. discuss the variations between the Sanskrit and Tibetan text in this instance and opt for a 'middle way' translation between the two (Jamspal et al. 2004, 135 fn 35).

³⁷ As atmospheric heat causes raindrops, so ritual asceticism (either by the priest or the ascetic) causes sweat, regarded as a 'homologue of the raindrops' (Kaelber 1989, p. 145). Also, see Kaelber 1989, pp. 19–20 for examples of ascetic mantra and food practices to generate rain.

³⁸ The meaning of the root *√sic* is 'to pour out' or 'to sprinkle'.

³⁹ For a discussion of the intersection of fire, water, and light in Vedic metaphors of sovereignty, see Proferes (2007, pp. 77–113).

⁴⁰ In Buddhism, the *abhiṣeka* rite formed a central part of early Buddhist mythology and ritual, used to describe the exalted position of *cakravartin*, the universal ruler of Buddhist mythology (Davidson 2002, p. 186).

abhravarṣa of *soma*, could have formed the basis for the Buddhist elaborations of *dharmavarṣa*,⁴¹ *dharmameghavarṣa*⁴² and *dharmameghabhūmi*.⁴³ Therefore, although the early classical context for the technical term *dharmamegha* is, as far as we know, Buddhist (and specifically early yogācāra within Mahāyāna), the Buddhists themselves were, most likely, drawing on earlier Vedic images of fertility and cosmogony in the *abhiṣeka* of the king.

To sum up so far, neither *dharmameghadhyāna* nor *dharmameghasamādhi* appear in the Buddhist sources that I have examined; rather, we find the compound *dharmameghabhūmi* in the Mahāyāna literature. However, given that the depiction of *dharmameghabhūmi* in the *Yogaśāstra* contains elimination of the *kleśas*, the attainment of infinite knowledge, and is related to ultimate *samādhi*, it is reasonable to make a link to the other *dharmamegha* that shares these features—that of Patañjali. However, in contrast to the qualitative abundance and the abundant quality of the Buddhist *dharmamegha*, Patañjali's metaphor is fairly devoid of qualities.

The Revision of a Superlative Metaphor

Drawing on conceptual metaphor theory, I will now present four different analyses that can each, in part, account for Patañjali's unique treatment of the term *dharmamegha* in relation to Buddhist sources.

Dharmamegha as a Dead Metaphor

One argument that can explain the two variant metaphorical treatments of *dharmamegha* in yoga and yogācāra is that of the standard distinction between creative and commonplace (dead) metaphors, underpinned by a passage of time. Dead metaphors are those that have been divorced from their original domain associations over time and have simply become a name or semantic placeholder for a thing or state.⁴⁴ Interpreting a dead metaphor⁴⁵ effectively becomes

⁴¹ In the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra*, as discussed above in “*Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra* and *Daśabhūmikasūtra*” section.

⁴² The Mahāyāna *Gaṇḍavyūha*, the 39th chapter of the *Avatamsakasūtra* (from the early CE and which also contains the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*), refers to the *dharmameghavarṣa: yogācārāṇām bodhisattvānām sarvadharmaśvabhāvatalanirghoṣaṃ nāma dharmameghavarṣaṃ* (Suzuki and Idzumi 1934: 94.13–14). Due to the constraints of this study, I have been unable to consult this text, but it would make another interesting point of investigation for future research.

⁴³ Indeed the *Apadāna* refers to the Vedic god of rain, Parjanya, in relation to *dharmamegha* e.g. *Apadāna*, Therāpadāna 54.530.4; Lilley (1925–1927, Part 2: 468). See footnote 21 in this article.

⁴⁴ Creative metaphors are those that are generated in a present and ‘live’ context, while commonplace (or dead) metaphors are those that have become ‘lexicalised’ or ‘conventionalized’ through repeated use over time, and so no longer have a conceptual link to the original metaphoric context. These commonplace metaphors become so engrained in our thinking that we no longer notice them. The linguistic expressions ‘a local branch of this organisation’ and ‘cultivating business relationships’ draw on tree and agriculture metaphors, while ‘the workings of the mind’ draws on the metaphor of the mind as a machine. These dead metaphors are so far removed in time from the historical contexts in which

disambiguation. It is possible that by the 4th century CE, the original domain qualities of the Buddhist term *dharmamegha* had been 'forgotten' by Patañjali (as they would be eventually by Patañjali's sub-commentators; see below). This would suggest a passage of time from the Buddhist 'active' generation of *dharmamegha* to Patañjali's 'dead' usage. According to this argument, by the time of the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*, *dharmamegha* was a moribund metaphor and not much more than a 'label', abstracted from its metaphorical context. However, given the approximate and close datings of the main texts under discussion here,⁴⁶ this argument is not robust.

Patañjali's Paralogical Metaphor: The Raincloud Without Any Rain

Conceptual metaphors are informed by processes of reasoning: not only can conceptual metaphors be driven by analogical reasoning (in the mapping from the source to the target domain), but they are often underpinned by syllogistic structures of deductive reasoning and are therefore subject to logical entailment. Metaphors, then, have their own logical entailments,⁴⁷ partly determined by the sensori-motor experience of the world we live in.⁴⁸ For example, the logical entailments of a cloud are qualities such as 'spatially elevated, water-producing, visible, etc.' and not 'bright green, underground, and made of bricks'. The metaphorical application of 'cloud' has to be consistent with real-world experience and also has to be internally

Footnote 44 continued

they were created that they are no longer perceived as metaphors but, rather, as literally descriptive language.

⁴⁵ Let us briefly review the compound *dharmameghabhūmi* as a multi-layered commonplace (or dead) metaphor in itself. To start with, of the three primary meanings of *dharma*, 'cosmic building block' and 'body of teaching' are both metaphorical. In contrast, 'religious conduct or virtue' is more descriptive. Moreover, the layers of metaphor in the Buddhist concept of *dharmameghabhūmi* appear to denote temporal/chronological stratification. There are at least three distinct metaphorical layers: the cloud (*megha*), the level/foundation or ground (*bhūmi*), and *dharma* itself, which is also arguably a metaphor. *Dharmameghabhūmi* is certainly a mixed metaphor: how can a cloud be a foundation or ground? Ironically, even as it becomes doctrinally important as the zenith, *dharmamegha* is already approaching the status of a commonplace metaphor by the early Mahāyāna period: since it is blended with the metaphor of *bhūmi*, the (earthly) foundation of the cloud of *dharma* is paradoxical to its core, entailing as it does that a cloud is an earthly stage. This is one paradox that Patañjali avoids; by linking *dharmamegha* to the more abstract terms of *dhyāna* and *samādhi*, he does not suggest that *dharmamegha* is also an earthly foundation. Patañjali's *dharmamegha* remains abstract and aloft.

⁴⁶ As discussed in the introduction, the likely dating for the early 'proto' layers of the *Yogācārabhūmiśāstra* is c. 2nd century CE with a final redaction in the 4th century CE, and the dating for the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* is c. 4th century CE.

⁴⁷ Here is an example of a syllogistic structure that produces the conceptual metaphor LOVE IS THE WIND:

Emotions are forces
Love is a natural force
[Therefore] Love is the wind

⁴⁸ If we accept that metaphors are cognitive, they are largely determined by sensori-motor experiences, and thus the logic of bodily processes is carried over into metaphors and applied to abstract conceptual domains. '[I]mage-schemas, which arise recurrently in our perception and bodily movement, have their own logic, which can be applied to abstract conceptual domains. Image-schematic logic then serves as the basis for inferences about abstract entities and operations' (Johnson 2005, p. 24).

logical (non-contradictory) in terms of the qualities it represents (i.e. in reality a cloud cannot be thunderous and fluffy at the same time). Yet some metaphors do operate on the basis of contradiction.⁴⁹ Therefore, the term ‘paralogical’ is apt to describe a metaphor in which there appears to be ‘a logical conflict of central meanings’ (Kamber and Macksey 1970, p. 871).⁵⁰

Functionally, Patañjali’s *dharmameghasamādhi* closely resembles the Buddhist *dharmameghabhūmi* as a superlative state: it is the goal of practice that provides endless knowledge and ultimate liberation. However, Patañjali strips back the metaphoric content of the Buddhist *dharmamegha*, so that the conceptual significance of the cloud is quite different; whereas the Buddhist cloud of rain primarily represents cultivation of growth, Patañjali’s cloud represents cessation of growth. In mapping the qualities of *megha* to the domain of liberation, Patañjali selectively edits the qualities in order to revise the *dharmamegha* metaphor for polemical effect.

As we saw in “*Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra* and *Daśabhūmikasūtra*” and “*Dharmameghabhūmi in the Yogācārabhūmiśāstra*” sections, in the early Mahāyāna context *dharmamegha* was an elaborate metaphorical cluster to indicate vastness, abundance, a higher state, nectar from ‘above’, the cooling and extinguishing of flames of affliction, and primarily the stimulation of roots of virtue to sprout, grow, and ripen. The image of the cloud is effective in this context because it is interwoven with the image of water as ‘rain’ or ‘ocean’. Notably, the flow of abundance is in two directions, from above (from the cloud to the ocean or earth) and from below (from the ocean to the cloud). This reflects the *bodhisattva* emphasis on ‘cascade’ teaching (sharing knowledge), in which the bodhisattva receives the rain of knowledge from the *tathāgatas* and then, in turn, rains knowledge to mortals.

In the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*, however, there is no such description of what the cloud of *dharma* contains, no image of a ‘rain of abundance’ or an ‘ocean of knowledge’. It is as though the name ‘*dharmamegha*’ is co-opted from Buddhist sources, abstracted for its symbolic or functional value, and divested of its obvious metaphoric content. But perhaps it is the very sparseness of Patañjali’s image that is itself most interesting, because it contains a logical twist. Patañjali’s inclusion of the term *dharmamegha*, if indeed it is co-opted, may be an active critique of the ‘other school’ of yoga, the rival yogācāra. Patañjali, then, not only divests *dharmamegha* of its qualitative content, but also subverts its metaphoric logic, or entailments—and hence conceptual power—by imbuing it with the notion of lack rather than abundance. Far from expressing fecund growth by nurturing and cultivating the seed, Patañjali’s *dharmamegha samādhi* is *nirbīja samādhi*, the state in which all traces of the seed of future *kleśa* have been eradicated. Here, the cloud of *dharma*

⁴⁹ Conceptual metaphor theory accounts for contradiction within metaphors by means of the mechanism of selective editing (highlighting and hiding qualities). It accounts for contradictions in a conceptual scheme by demonstrating that apparently contradictory metaphors can share entailments.

⁵⁰ Elsewhere, Beardsley used the term ‘paralogical’ to describe metaphors that bear no trace of similarity; they are like idioms that cannot be explained, only learnt (Beardsley 1958).

presides over the negation of the seed, and the goal is to cut any growth by root and branch:

tallābhād avidyādayaḥ kleśāḥ samūlakāṣaṃ kaṣitā bhavanti kuśalākuśalāś ca karmāśayāḥ samūlaghātaṃ hatā bhavanti
(PYŚ 4.30; Āgāṣe 1904, p. 202)

From attaining that (*dharmamegha*), the *kleśas* of *avidyā* etc. are cut by root and branch and the karmic substrata, good and bad, are destroyed utterly.

Hence Patañjali's *dharmamegha* metaphor is a raincloud without any rain.

The cessative and negating functions⁵¹ of Patañjali's *dharmamegha* are continued in the interpretations of the sub-commentaries. It is worth reviewing these in brief, since they amplify the logical entailments of Patañjali's metaphoric treatment of *dharmamegha*. In the earliest commentary on the PYŚ, the c. 8th-century *Yogasūtrabhāṣyavivaraṇa*,⁵² Śāṅkara does not elaborate on YS 4.29 (the only *sūtra* to refer to *dharmamegha*), but does explain the term as the maturing of correct vision.⁵³ Yet the *Vivaraṇa* to YS 4.30-31 carries a set of interesting metaphoric entailments that belong to the cloud of dharma. Overall, Śāṅkara's treatment of *dharmamegha* continues Patañjali's spartan presentation to elaborate a further act of qualitative erasure, one that is progressively unfolded.

While Patañjali abstracts the raincloud image to divest it of rain, thus committing a logical inversion⁵⁴ of the original metaphor, Śāṅkara takes this process several steps further. He describes a rain of negation, rain as ontological isolation, an impotent ocean, and the eventual erasure of the cloud itself. Let us now look at how he does this:

1. Firstly, Śāṅkara reinstates the image of rain in the cloud metaphor: 'Its name is *dharmamegha* because it rains the utmost *dharma* called *kaivalya* (isolation)'.⁵⁵

⁵¹ We must be clear that Patañjali does not map the potential negative qualities of a cloud, such as 'gloomy' or 'destructive'. Patañjali's *dharmamegha* has a negating function but is not a negative image in itself, being a superlative attainment.

⁵² The arguments as to whether or not the *Vivaraṇa* can be attributed to Śāṅkara and dated this early are both controversial. For the claim that the *Vivaraṇa* was a c. 8th –century composition by Śāṅkara, see Leggett (1990) and Harimoto (2014). For the counterargument that the text is as late as the 11th–14th century, see Gelblum (1992), Rukmani (2001), and Larson and Bhattacharya (2008).

⁵³ *tasya dharmameghanāmanāḥ samādheḥ samyagdarśanapākābhīrūpasya* (Viv. 4.30; Sastri and Krishnamurthi 1952, p. 363).

⁵⁴ The logical inversion of a metaphor is to render its conventional meaning antonymic by using selective editing (highlighting and hiding) to map qualities that contravene a conventional semantic field. Thus in the Buddhist metaphor 'liberation is a raincloud', the properties of the raincloud are mapped to the domain of spiritual liberation—following the convention that a raincloud is good because it provides abundant rain. In Patañjali's metaphor this conventional meaning is logically inverted to claim that a raincloud is good because it has no rain.

⁵⁵ *kaivalyākhyam paraṃ dharma varṣatīti dharmameghaḥ iti saṃjñā* (Viv 4.29; Sastri and Krishnamurthi 1952, p. 363).

2. The rain, according to Śāṅkara, is the dharma of *kaivalya* (isolation)—which denotes dharma as an ontological state.⁵⁶ In Sāṃkhya, this ontological state of *kaivalya* is characterized by subtraction (of the material world from consciousness, which is separate) rather than abundance (in the material world). This contrasts with the Buddhist rain of infinite abundance.
3. Next we encounter an image of a body of water. Śāṅkara likens sattvic knowledge (the highest form of knowledge in the material realm) to an ocean, which brings to mind the ocean of knowledge of the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*. However, unlike that image, Śāṅkara's image of the ocean is one that is devoid of potency because it is a great ocean (*mahodadhi*), motionless (*nistaraṃga*), isolated, unchangeable (*avikriya*), still, empty, not capable of perceiving anything.
4. Finally, the resulting state of *sattva* is as if the sun stands in the middle of a clear sky with all clouds vanished (Viv 4.31).⁵⁷ (Viv 4.31; Sastri and Krishnamurthi 1952, p. 365).

Here we see the active erasure of the cloud image itself. In Śāṅkara's final interpretation, the cloud has been dispelled.⁵⁸

In his explication of *dharmamegha*, Śāṅkara steers Patañjali's process of negation to its logical conclusion, so that *dharmamegha* becomes a cloud of dharma without a cloud.

Although it is beyond the scope of this study to fully consider later historical commentaries, it is interesting to note that the subsequent medieval sub-commentators appear to have followed Śāṅkara's interpretation of *dharmamegha* to mean 'absence of cloud'. In the 10th-century Bhojarāja's *Rājamārtanḍa* connects *dharmamegha* to Patañjali's image of irrigation (PYŚ 4.3) and follows Śāṅkara's reading of *dharmamegha* as resulting in a sky that is free from clouds (Mitra 1883, pp. 203–204). Vācaspatimiśra (circa 10th century) elaborates further on the metaphor by asserting that a cloud-free sky increases available light: 'For just as in autumn when the rays of the moon are freed from a dense veil [of cloud], and when they are brilliant in all directions, the light is so endless.' This light leads to endless knowledge (Woods 1914, p. 342).⁵⁹ Śāṅkara thus initiates a change in the primary metaphoric function of *dharmamegha* from water-producing to light-producing, and this interpretation is consolidated in the commentaries of Bhojarāja and Vācaspatimiśra. In these medieval sub-commentaries, the original metaphoric import of *dharmamegha* as a positive image has been forgotten to such a degree that the cloud becomes the obstacle to the light, the factor that obscures knowledge, rather than the

⁵⁶ My understanding of Sāṃkhya's *kaivalya* is that it is not just an epistemological distinction but ultimately an ontological one (i.e. one resides in the state of *puruṣa*).

⁵⁷ *aśeṣajñeyaviśayatvamambaratalamadhyavartino jaladharanīrodhanirgatasya kheriva*

⁵⁸ Jacqueline Suthren-Hirst has pointed out the potentially positive *value* of the sky with a vanishing cloud (as in a pleasant post-rain state) (personal communication 2.7.2018). It is worth emphasizing again my differentiation between negative and positive 'values' and 'functions' in these literary descriptions (see above).

⁵⁹ *yathā hi śaradī ghanapaṭalamuktasya caṇḍārciṣaḥ paritāḥ pradyotamānasya prakāśānantyāt prakāśyā ghaṭādayo+alpāḥ prakāśante, evam apagarajastamasāś cittasattvasya prakāśānantyād alpam prakāśyam iti* (Tattvavaiśaradī 4.31: Āgāśe 1904, p. 203, lines 17–19)

producer of knowledge as rain. However, this trend does not continue consistently. In the circa-14th-century *Pañcadaśī*, an introduction to Vedānta, the author describes *dharmamegha* in terms resonant of the early Mahāyāna texts: 'The experts of yoga called this *samādhi* the cloud of dharma, since it rains an immeasurable downpour of the nectar of dharma.'⁶⁰ And, indeed, the last of the classical commentators, the 15th–16th-century Vijñānabhikṣu, also re-establishes the centrality of water to the metaphor in the form of rain: *dharmamegha* is so-called because it rains or pours down the dharma that completely destroys the remainder or root of all afflictions and actions.⁶¹ With the exception of the *Pañcadaśī*, the train of medieval commentarial revisions⁶² sustains Patañjali's treatment of *dharmamegha* as a negating principle.⁶³

According to this line of analysis, Patañjali's *dharmamegha* is a polemical revision of a core Mahāyāna metaphor; Patañjali grafts the signature Buddhist term *dharmamegha* onto his own Sāṃkhya-inflected system in full knowledge of its flagrant polemic effect. The significance of inverting the metaphoric value reflects that he is also inverting its soteriological value: Patañjali takes the abundantly rain-filled *dharmamegha* that symbolizes social sharing and converts it to an empty *dharmamegha* that symbolizes internal cessation. With its emphasis on teaching for the benefit of all humankind, Buddhist *dharmamegha* thus stands in stark contrast to the Sāṃkhya ontological divorce from the material world.⁶⁴ Given that the co-option of terms and concepts was common between rival religious groups in the classical period, the argument that Patañjali's *dharmamegha* was an intentional paralogical revision of metaphor is a strong one.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ *dharmamegham imaṃ prāhuḥ samādhiṃ yogavittamāḥ / varṣaty eṣa yato dharmāmṛtadhāraḥ sahasraśaḥ ||* (*Pañcadaśī* 1.60; cited in Bagchi 1967, p. 22). For a discussion of the authorship and provenance of the *Pañcadaśī*, see Fort (1998, pp. 114–115).

⁶¹ *kṣeṣakarmādīnāṃ niḥśeṣeṇonmulakam dharmaṃ mehati varṣatīti dharmameghaḥ* (*Yogavārttika* 4.29; Rukmani 1981–1989, 4: 122).

⁶² Due to constraints of space, I have limited further investigation of the historical treatment of *dharmamegha* in the medieval period, but it would be an interesting topic for enquiry.

⁶³ Outside of the Brahmanical textual tradition, however, *dharmamegha* appears to have been associated with Patañjali. In c. 8th century CE, the Jain author Haribhadra Virahāṅka produced several important texts on yoga: in Sanskrit the *Yogabindu* (with auto-commentary) and the *Yogaḍṛṣṭisamuccaya*, and in Prakrit the *Yogaviṃśikā* (with a Sanskrit auto-commentary) and the *Yogaśataka*. Yaśovijaya's 17th-century commentary on the *Yogaviṃśikā* refers to *dharmamegha* as the name applied by those who follow Patañjali to the state of cognitive cessation (*ayaṃ ca dharmameghaḥ iti pātañjalair gīyate*) (YV 20). It is even described in terms of the burnt seed of *ṛtti* (*ṛttibijadāha*)—indicating that the soteriology of Patañjali was very much associated with the two metaphors of the burnt seed and the cloud of dharma. (For more on the burnt seed image, see O'Brien-Kop 2017).

⁶⁴ This may also be a trace of the Brahmanical soteriology of apophysis (negative theology): that the ultimate principle, *brahman*, cannot be understood via presence but only inferred via absence.

⁶⁵ We must also consider that the logical inversion of *dharmamegha* is not the only polemical instance in the PYŚ. There are at least two other critiques of specifically Mahāyāna doctrines. The first is the explicit rejection of the *cittamātra* (mind-only) position in the fourth pāda (PYŚ 4.14–23), a doctrine associated with Yogācāra. The second example is Patañjali's description of the pleasures of heaven (PYŚ 3.51), which appears to undermine Mahāyāna concepts. The false promises of the gods to lure the yogin to heaven include divine sight and hearing (*divye śrotracakṣuṣī*) and obtaining a diamond-like body (*vajropamaḥ kāya*). These are both familiar motifs used to describe the bodhisattva in the *Śrāvakabhūmi* and in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, where they characterise *dharmameghabhūmi*: the *bodhisattva* is described

Dharmamegha as Cessative Liberation

According to this third argument, Patañjali's *dharmamegha* does not carry entailments that contradict Buddhist soteriology, but rather *dharmamegha* is logically concordant with a slightly variant scheme in the *Yogācārabhūmiśāstra*, in which the superlative state on the path to liberation is not 'abundance' but 'cessation'.

There is a least one description in the *Yogācārabhūmiśāstra* that comes close to representing *dharmamegha* in terms of cessation. In the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*,⁶⁶ the seventh⁶⁷ chapter refers to the ultimate form of yoga discipline, which is Buddhist yoga. This chapter contains the ten *bhūmis* that we find in the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*, with *dharmamegha* as the tenth stage. However, it also includes an 11th *bhūmi* beyond the 10th to represent the superlative state, *tathāgatabhūmi*, 'the stage of realization of enlightenment' (Cleary 1995, p. 62).⁶⁸ As in the *Daśabhūmikasūtra* and the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*'s description of *dharmamegha* is a cloud of vast expansion, conveying a sense of infinitude (SNS 7; Cleary 1995, p. 72).⁶⁹ However, *dharmamegha* is now separated from the *bodhisattvabhūmi*, which replaces it as the superlative state. This innovated 11th stage is a state of permanent cessation, and the qualities mapped to this *bhūmi* express negating functions: the elimination of the *kleśas*, non-attachment, and non-

Footnote 65 continued

as having a *vajropamaḥ samādhi* (e.g. BoBh 3.6; Wogihara 1930–1936, p. 405, line 16), and the acquisition of the divine ear and sight are the core elements of the fivefold divine powers obtained on the path. These two powers also appear in the third *pāda* of the PYŚ in the list of the *siddhis*. It seems that the 'celestial gods' are being used as a vehicle in which to critique the faulty promises of the Buddhists. The diamond body or diamond *samādhi* is an important metaphor in both Sarvāstivāda and Mahāyāna soteriology (Buswell 1989, pp. 104–114). The *vajropamasamādhi* is the culmination of the *bhāvanā-mārga* in the Sarvāstivāda path scheme (Gethin 2007, p. 337). And in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, for example, the 10th stage of *dharmamegha* is superceded by an ultimate eleventh stage (see "*Dharmamegha as Cessative Liberation*" section in this article), the *tathāgatabhūmi*, in which the last subtle remnants (that remain at the 11th stage)—cognitive hindrance (*jñeyāvaraṇa*) and afflictive hindrance (*kleśāvaraṇa*)—are completely eradicated by the diamond-like *samādhi*. Although Patañjali's text does not show awareness of this superlative level of the diamond *samādhi*, he does discuss the diamond form of the body: *rūpalāvaṇyabalavajrasamghananatvāni kāyasampat darśanīyaḥ kāntimān atīṣayabalo vajrasamghananāś ceti*. (PYŚ 3.46; Āgāṣe 1904, p. 165) 'Perfection of the body is beauty of form, strength and diamond hardness. And it is made to appear as beautiful, unsurpassed in strength, and diamond-hard.' Interestingly Śāṅkara does not comment on this *sūtra*. However the *bhāṣya* commentary to the preceding *sūtra* describes the body in terms of hardness—although it does not use the term 'diamond'. The 'perfections are the body' and 'the earth with its hardness does not oppose the movements of the yogin, for his body can penetrate even rock; waters with all their wetness do not moisten the yogin; fire does not burn him with its heat, nor does the wind which makes all bow, move him; in space, which by nature obstructs nothing, he becomes hidden, becoming invisible even to perfected beings' (trs. Leggett 1990, p. 349). This passage, of course, is referring to the five elements.

⁶⁶ This is an independent text that is embedded in the supplementary section of the *Yogācārabhūmiśāstra*.

⁶⁷ Depending on the critical edition that one consults, this can be the seventh or eighth chapter.

⁶⁸ We also find this scheme in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, in which the 10th stage of *dharmamegha* is superceded by the eleventh stage, the *tathāgatabhūmi* (see footnote 65).

⁶⁹ 'The tenth stage is called cloud of teaching because the gross body is as vast as space and the spiritual body is fulfilled, like a great cloud that can cover all' (trs. Cleary 1995, p. 72). Here, Cleary translates *dharmamegha* as 'cloud of teaching'.

obstruction of realization (SNS 7; Cleary 1995, p. 72). From this observation, one can speculate that Patañjali's *dharmamegha* echoes not the *Daśabhūmikasūtra* nor the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* but rather the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* by combining the 10th and 11th levels of attainment into a single concept: a *dharmamegha* that produces not abundance but cessation.⁷⁰

In the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*, *dharmameghasamādhi* is equated with seedless concentration (*nirbīja samādhi*), which is the state of cessation of affliction (*kleśanirodha*) in which all traces of the seed of future *kleśa* have been eradicated (PYŚ 4.29). Generally in the PYŚ, the botanical image of the seed is one that is clearly framed in terms of non-germination.⁷¹ There is therefore no need of an image of 'rain' to accompany the seed, as this would in fact be counter-productive to the soteriological goal of the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*. Within a soteriology of cessative liberation, then—possibly shared with texts such as the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*—Patañjali's *dharmamegha* is logically concordant, and its entailments are selectively edited to make it so.

In summary, this argument posits that Patañjali does not deliberately invert the metaphor for polemical effect, but is rather drawing on the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*'s version of *dharmamegha*, and—resonant of Buddhist Sarvāstivāda or Sautrāntika positions—constructs a concept of liberation as strictly cessative. Due to certain conceptual and discursive interconnections between the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* and the *Yogācārabhūmiśāstra*,⁷² we cannot rule out this line of reasoning. However, given the relative paucity of information on the *bhūmis* in the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* and the prevalence of theories of cessation in Buddhist literature as a whole, there would be no need to tie Patañjali's soteriology specifically to the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*, rather than to any other Buddhist text from the early common era. The argument that Patañjali's *dharmamegha* draws on the SNS does not stand up to scrutiny.

There is, however, one further, and stronger, argument to be laid out in order to understand how Patañjali's *dharmamegha* relates to its contemporaneous Buddhist contexts.

Factors of Literary Style: From Hyperbole to Understatement

Patañjali's apparent inversion of the metaphoric value of *dharmamegha* may be a product of literary form. Literary style itself not only affects the way metaphors are employed but it can also amplify doctrinal difference. The richly evocative cosmological descriptions of Mahāyāna Buddhist treatises co-evolved with the invention of writing (Harrison 2003), whereas Brahmanic *śāstras* are a more faithful

⁷⁰ Schmithausen has pointed out that the *Daśabhūmikasūtra* is older than the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* (Schmithausen 2016, p. 401). Thus one can argue that Patañjali's text and the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* are both referencing older Sarvāstivādin yogācāra concepts of *dharmamegha* that may be grounded in Sautrāntika thought regarding the permanent negation of the seed and all its carriers (O'Brien-Kop 2017).

⁷¹ In the PYŚ, the concept of *kleśa* is constructed using the botanical image of the seed that is sterile—and this draws on technical specificities of Sautrāntika discourse, particularly those that feature in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (O'Brien-Kop 2017).

⁷² For further discussion see O'Brien-Kop (2018, Chap. 3).

transmission of oral culture—Tubb and Boose describe the *sūtra* format as ‘essentially signposts in a line of oral argument’ (Tubb and Boose 2007, p. 1). I suggest that since the descriptive structures of Mahāyāna Buddhist writing are more elaborate, they can more effectively exploit the literary potential of metaphors.

In the textual culture of early Mahāyāna, literary style became more complex and innovative than that of oral texts.⁷³ Indeed, the invention of writing may have *partly* provided the impetus and vehicle for doctrinal developments in Buddhism that led to Mahāyāna.⁷⁴ The Mahāyāna writers displayed specific literary techniques to hone and express doctrinal concepts: for example, conveying ‘eternity’ and ‘infinity’ through syntagmatic extension.⁷⁵ As a result, the Buddhist accounts of *dharmameghabhūmi* in the *Daśabhūmikasūtra* and the *Yogācārabhūmiśāstra* are hyperbolic, so as to become almost unprocessable in the cognitive domain (Flores 2008, p. 14). In terms of source and target, the Mahāyāna literary style exaggerates the structure of metaphor, repeating and multiplying the qualities of the target domain to enhance meaning. Thus a basic doctrinal statement such as: ‘The Buddha is infinite’ becomes ‘The Buddha is immeasurably infinite, projected across the sky a million trillion times, in countless infinite directions, in myriad images of forms upon forms for all eternities upon eternities, with innumerable qualities,’ etc.⁷⁶ This literary style is not just about embellishment. It is the use of particular literary devices to formally express the doctrine of infinitude: the layering of synonyms upon synonyms generates chains of signifiers that appear to be without end. Furthermore, the stylistic use of synonymic saturation *is* the doctrine of infinitude in experiential form for the text’s consumer, whether through reading, listening, or imagining.

The Mahāyāna literary style contrasts significantly with the literary style of the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*. The Brahmanical *sūtra* genre of compressed aphorisms⁷⁷ belongs to oral textual culture and was designed for memorization. Hence, it is formally minimal. Patañjali’s metaphor is *only* superlative, and is not linked to any numbered levels or stages of attainment, as in the Buddhist schemes. I propose that, by virtue of a literary style that rests on compression, Patañjali’s *dharmamegha* is ‘super-compressed’ and takes all ten levels of the *dharmameghabhūmi* scheme and squashes them into one. Synechdochally, *dharmamegha* is a part that stands in for the whole⁷⁸: the superlative stage in itself signifies the whole scheme of ten stages (and therefore *dharmamegha* stands in for the whole of spiritual cultivation or

⁷³ On the relationship of early Buddhist Pāli canonical suttas to mnemonic functions in oral culture, see Allon (1997).

⁷⁴ This thesis was put forward by scholars such as Harrison (2003), but has recently been refuted by Drewes (2010, 2018).

⁷⁵ Collins uses the term ‘infinite extension’ (Collins 2010, p. 25) to describe the way in which eternity is portrayed or understood in Mahāyāna texts.

⁷⁶ This is a paraphrase of typical literary style in the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*.

⁷⁷ It has been argued that the word *sutta* in the Buddhist *sutta* genre was derived from Vedic *sūkta* (hymn) and not *sūtra* (thread/aphorism), and so, like the *sūktas*, the Buddhist *sutta* genre is characterised by extolment and hyperbole and not conciseness (e.g. Norman 2006, p. 135).

⁷⁸ Synechdoche is a special instance of metonymy. In metonymy, one thing stands in for another, while in synechdoche, a part of one thing stands in for the whole of that thing.

bhāvanā, as not just any part but the *best* part). For audiences in the living religious-philosophical communities of the 4th century CE, the context would have been obvious—that of the Buddhist scheme of the *daśabhūmis* (the ten foundations or stages). Today's readers, however, have to painstakingly unpick the densely compressed threads of meaning. There is often an 'enigmatic' quality to a *sūtra* text because so much is left unsaid (and without living oral transmission has been lost to history).

There is one other instance of understatement in Patañjali's *dharmamegha*. Patañjali describes the infinite knowledge of *dharmamegha* by referencing what is *not* accessed: the unaccessed knowledge is likened to fireflies in the sky (PYŚ 4.31). In Patañjali's image, the ineffability of infinite knowledge is not conveyed (as in the Mahāyāna texts) with metaphors of infinity but with a counter-intuitive simile of extreme finitude. The infinity of the knowledge gained is demonstrated negatively: that which remains unknown at the level of *dharmamegha* is like fireflies in the sky, i.e. insignificant. Although Patañjali's account of *dharmameghasamādhi* shares a theory of infinite knowledge with the yogācāra attainment at *dharmameghabhūmi*, the metaphor is framed in the negative. Such apophatic soteriology is reified by the compression of literary form, creating an ellipsis at the heart of the text.

There is one final aspect of paralogical revision, and it is a 're-vision': the inversion of the significance of the 'vision' of *dharmamegha*. Although the yoga and yogācāra presentations of infinite knowledge are framed differently, both accounts are anchored in the root metaphor of vision (KNOWING IS SEEING).⁷⁹ The soteriology of Sāṃkhya rests on the correct vision (i.e. knowledge) of the ultimate ontological distinction (*puruṣa* and *prakṛti*). Equally, Mahāyāna visionary meditation gravitates around florid images of the Buddha. Yet these are two divergent notions of vision: Patañjali's vision of *dharmamegha* is the perception of an unseen reality (*puruṣa*), while the yogācāra vision is of the majestic spectacle of proliferating *buddhas* without end. It is, then, perhaps no surprise that underlying the construction of negative metaphors in Patañjali's text is a doctrine of negative vision: the goal of Sāṃkhya is to see the unseen (the non-material).

Both the *sūtra* and the Mahāyāna *śāstra* formats gesture towards the ineffable. They simply do it in opposite ways: Patañjali approaches the ineffability of *puruṣa* through silence and apophasis, while the verbose proliferation of Mahāyāna texts signal that even an infinite number of synonymic descriptions could never suffice to express the unbounded state of Buddhahood.⁸⁰ These issues of style both reflect and generate doctrinal differences between yoga and yogācāra. There appears to be no precedent in Buddhist thought for abstracting *dharmamegha* from the tenfold (or sometimes 11-fold) scheme of *bhūmis* in order to treat it in isolation in a meditation

⁷⁹ Cognitive metaphor scholars use these schematic phrases in capitals to denote a cognitive metaphor. As Gibbs explains: 'The schematic phrase LIFE IS A JOURNEY represents only a convenient summary description of the rich set of mental mappings that characterize the complex relationship between target (LIFE) and source (JOURNEY)' (Gibbs 2017, p. 18).

⁸⁰ Although *bodhi* is framed in this way in our selected Mahāyāna texts, earlier conceptions of *nirvāṇa* were apophatic. As we have noted, the very concept of *nirvāṇa* is itself constructed using the negative. The literal meaning of *nirvāṇa* is 'extinguished' or 'quenched', as in the notion of a fire quenched due to lack of fuel (Gombrich 1996, pp. 66–67).

treatise. Thus Patañjali's appropriation of *dharmamegha* is already radical—in that he leaves behind the other nine steps and indeed the whole paradigm. If it is the case that Patañjali merely abstracts the superlative state, this is itself a hostile paradigmatic revision.

Lakoff and Johnson insisted that domain-mapping in metaphor could never be a totalising enterprise, or it would result in simple identification between two domains. Hence domain-mapping is always partial, in that there is selective editing (highlighting and hiding). Neither Patañjali nor the Mahāyāna scholars mapped *all* the qualities of a cloud to the theory of liberation. In order to make *dharmamegha* work at all, they had to exclude a whole host of other properties (e.g a cloud can also be gloomy, destructive, beyond reach, etc.). As we have seen, Patañjali's *dharmamegha* is more of a semantic placeholder than a 'productive' metaphor that maps domain qualities of rain, elevation, fullness, unattainability, ephemerality, abundance, etc. Indeed, Patañjali's metaphor contains little domain-mapping of qualities—most are hidden, and not highlighted.

Conclusion

By categorizing the *Yogācārabhūmiśāstra* as a *yogaśāstra*, I have put forward the necessity of considering that there were prior systems of non-Brahmanical yoga discipline to Pātañjala yoga.⁸¹ If Pātañjala yoga post-dates early yogācāra—and it most likely does—this strengthens the argument that Patañjali knowingly references key yogācāra paradigms.

In my concluding assessment, Patañjali's strikingly empty metaphor of *dharmamegha* is largely a result of literary style and polemical revision due to doctrinal necessity. It is not a result of deliberate harmonization with Mahāyāna soteriology (such as that of the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*) nor due to the ambiguity of dead metaphor. Indeed, because of the specific use of the term *dharmamegha* in Buddhist texts from the 2nd-century CE onwards, it can be stated with some confidence that Patañjali adopts the term *dharmamegha* from the Buddhist conceptual sphere for polemical effect. The nature of this revision is paralogical; selective editing highlights the negating qualities of a raincloud to support a doctrine of apophasis and a soteriology of cessation, in line with Sāṃkhya metaphysics. The revision of the *dharmamegha* metaphor was also compounded by factors of literary style, in particular the predominant feature of the Brahmanical *sūtra* genre, compression. What is less easy to clarify is the exact Buddhist textual sources, debates or thinkers from which Patañjali may have drawn. However, due to their association of *dharmamegha* with yoga discipline (yogācāra), we can point to the early layers of the *Yogācārabhūmiśāstra* (the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* and the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*) and to the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*, all of which potentially

⁸¹ There are other early systems to consider, such as the *śadaṅgayoga* of the *Maitrī Upaniṣad* (MU 61.8) in the early centuries of the Common Era, although the six stages are recounted in name only and not in detail.

predate the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*.⁸² This article has traced the metaphoric import of *megha* in *dharmamegha*, using conceptual metaphor theory, and also hopes to provide a fresh starting point for revisiting the meaning of *dharma* in *dharmamegha*.

Acknowledgements The author would like to thank Jacqueline Suthren-Hirst, Richard King, Rupert Gethin, Theodore Proferes, James Mallinson and participants at the 2018 Sanskrit Tradition in the Modern World Symposium for their valuable comments on earlier drafts of this paper. Any remaining errors are my own.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Conflict of interest This author has no conflict of interests to declare.

Open Access This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License, which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons licence, and indicate if changes were made. The images or other third party material in this article are included in the article's Creative Commons licence, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the article's Creative Commons licence and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

References

Primary

- Āgāśe, K. (Ed.). (1904). *Vācaspatimīśraviracitaṭīkāśaṃvalitavyāsabhāṣyasametāni Pātañjalayogasūtrāṇi, Tathā Bhojadevaviracitārājamārtanḍābhīdhavṛttisametāni pātañjalayogasūtrāṇi. sūtrapāṭhasūtravarnānukramasūcibhyāṃ ca Saṅgāhikṛtāni*. Poona: Ānandāśrama.
- Angot, M. (trs.). (2012). *Le Yoga-sutra de Patanjali. Le Yoga-Bhāṣya de Vyasa avec des Extraits du Yoga-Vartika de Vijnana-Bhikṣu*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres.
- Bangali, B. (trs.). (1976). *Yogasutra of Patanjali with the Commentary of Vyasa*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Belvalkar, S. (Ed.). (1954). *The Sāntiparvan*. In *The Mahābhārata, For the First Time Critically Edited. Volume 14-16*. Poona: Bhandakar Oriental Research Institute.
- Cleary, T. (trs.). (1995). *Buddhist Yoga*. Boston: Shambala.
- Edgerton, F. (trs.). (1965). *The Beginnings of Indian Philosophy: Selections from the Rig Veda, Atharva Veda, Upanisads, and Mahābhārata*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Horner, I. B. (trs.). (1963–1964). *Milinda's Questions: Translated from the Pali*. Sacred Books of the Buddhists (Vols. 22–23). London: Luzac.
- Horner, I. B. (trs.). (1975). *Chronicle of Buddhas (Buddhavaṃsa) and Basket of Conduct (Cariyāpiṭaka)*. Sacred Books of the Buddhists, Vol XXXI: The Minor Anthologies of the Pali Canon, Part III. London: Pāli Text Society.
- Jayawickrama, N. A. (Ed.). (1974). *Buddhavaṃsa and Cariyāpiṭaka*. PTS text series (Vol. 166). London: Pāli Text Society.
- Jamspal, L., Clark, R., Wilson, J., Zwilling, L., Sweet, M., & Thurman, R. (trs.). (2004). *The Universal Vehicle Discourse Literature (Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra) by Maitreyanātha/Āryāsaṅga Together with its Commentary (Bhāṣya) by Vasubandhu*. Translated from the Sanskrit, Tibetan and Chinese. New York: American Institute of Buddhist Studies, Columbia University and Columbia University's Center for Buddhist Studies and Tibet House US.

⁸² Indeed, Patañjali may have had knowledge of other independent yogācāra texts in circulation, such as the *Śrāvakabhūmi*, the *Bhāvanāmayī Bhūmiḥ* or the early **Yogācārabhūmi* of Saṅgharakṣa.

- Leggett, T. (trs.). (1990). *The Complete Commentary by Sankara on the Yoga Sūtras: A Full Translation of the Newly Discovered Text*. London: Kegan Paul International.
- Lévi, S. (Ed., trs.). (1907). *Mahāyāna-sūtrālaṃkāra. Exposé de la Doctrine de Grande Véhicule*. Paris: Libraire Honoré Champion.
- Lilley, M. (Ed.). (1925–1927). *The Apadāna of the Khuddaka Nikāya: Parts I and II*. Oxford: Pali Text Society.
- Olivelle, P. (trs.). (1998). *The Early Upaniṣads: Annotated Text and Translation*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Maas, P. (Ed.). (2006). *Samādhipāda. Das erste Kapitel des Pātañjalayogaśāstra zum ersten Mal Kritisch Ediert*. GeisteskulturIndiens. Texte und Studien (Vol. 9). Aachen: Studia Indologica Universitatis Halensis.
- Mitra, R. (trs.). (1883). *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali: With the Commentary of Bhoja Raja and an English translation*. Calcutta: Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal.
- Rahder, J. (Ed.). (1926). *Daśabhūmikasūtra*. Leuven: JB Ista.
- Rukmani, T. S. (trs.). (1981–1989). *Yogavārtika of Viṇṇābhikṣu: Text, with English Translation and Critical Notes along with the Text and English Translation of the Pātañjala Yogasūtra and Vyāsabhāṣya* (4 vol). New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal.
- Rukmani, T. S. (trs.). (2001). *Yogasūtrabhāṣyavivarāṇa of Śaṅkara: Vivaraṇa Text with English Translation, and Critical Notes along with Text and English Translation of Patañjali's Yogasūtras and Vyāsabhāṣya, Volumes 1 and 2*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd.
- Sastri, R., & Krishnamurthi, S. R. (Eds.). (1952). *Pātañjalayogasūtrabhāṣya Vivaraṇaṃ of Śaṅkara-Bhagavat Pāda*. Madras: Government Oriental Manuscripts Library.
- Stuart, D. (2015). *A Less Travelled path: Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra Chapter 2: Critically Edited with a Study on its Structure and Significance for the Development of Buddhist Meditation. Volumes 1 and 2*. Beijing: China Tibetology Publishing House and Austrian Academy of Sciences Press.
- Suzuki, D. T., & Idzumi, H. (Eds.). (1934). *The Gandavyuha Sutra*. Kyoto: Sanskrit Buddhist Texts Publishing Society.
- Trenckner, V. (Ed.). (1962). *The Milindapañho: Being Dialogues between King Milinda and the Buddhist Sage Nāgasena. The Pāli Text*. London: Pali Text Society, Luzac & Company Ltd.
- Vaidya, P. L. (Ed.). (1967). *Daśabhūmikasūtra*. Buddhist Sanskrit texts no. 7. Darbhanga: The Mithila Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning.
- Walters, J. (trs.). (2017). *Legends of the Buddhist Saints*. Wala Wala: Jonathan S Walters and Whitman College.
- Wogihara, U. (Ed.). (1930). *Bodhisattvabhūmi: A Statement of Whole Course of the Bodhisattva (Being Fifteenth Section of Yogācārabhūmi)*. Tokyo: Taisho College.
- Wogihara, U., & Tsuchida, C. (1934). *Saddharmapuṇḍarika-sūtram*. Tokyo: Bibliotheca Buddhica Publication.
- Woods, J. (trs.). (1914). *The Yoga-System of Patañjali [...] and the comment called Yoga-Bhāṣya attributed to Veda-Vyāsa and the explanation called Tattva-Vaiśārādī of Vācaspati Miśra*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Oriental Series.
- Woodward, F. L., et al. (1973). *Pāli Tipiṭakam Concordance* (Vol. II). London: Pali Text Society London.

Secondary

- Allon, M. (1997). *Style and function: A study of the dominant stylistic features of the prose portions of Pāli Canonical Sutta texts and their mnemonic function*. Studio Philologica Buddhica: Monograph series, XII. Tokyo: The International Institute for Buddhist Studies.
- Bagchi, S. (1967). Introduction. In P. L. Vaidya (Ed.), *Daśabhūmikasūtra*. Buddhist Sanskrit texts no. 7. Darbhanga: The Mithila Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning.
- Beardsley, M. (1958). *Aesthetics: Problems in the philosophy of criticism*. New York: Harcourt Brace.
- Buescher, H. (2008). *The inception of Yogācāra-Viṇṇānavāda*. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- Buswell, R. (1989). *The formation of Ch'an ideology in China and Korea: The Vajrasamādhi-Sūtra, a Buddhist apocryphon*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Collins, S. (2010). *Nirvana: Concept, imagery, narrative*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Conze, E. (1954). *Buddhist texts through the ages*. Oxford: Bruno Cassirer.
- Davidson, R. (2002). *Indian esoteric Buddhism: A social history of the tantric movement*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Deleau, F. (Ed.). (2006). *The Chapter on the Mundane Path (Laukikamārga): A Trilingual Edition (Sanskrit, Tibetan, Chinese), Annotated Translation and Introductory Study* (2 vol). Tokyo: International Institute for Buddhist Studies.
- Demiéville, P. (1951). La Yogācārabhūmi de Saṅgharakṣa. *Bulletin du l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient*, 44(2), 339–436.
- Drewes, D. (2010). Early Indian Mahāyāna Buddhism II: New perspectives. *Religion Compass*, 4, 2.
- Drewes, D. (2018). The Forest Hypothesis. In P. Harrison (Ed.), *Setting out on the great way: Essays on early Mahāyāna Buddhism*. Sheffield and Bristol: Equinox.
- Edgerton, F. (1953). *Buddhist hybrid Sanskrit grammar and dictionary*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Flores, R. (2008). *Buddhist scriptures as literature: Sacred rhetoric and the uses of theory*. Albany: SUNY.
- Fort, A. (1998). *Jivanmukti in transformation: Embodied liberation in Advaita and Neo-Vedānta*. New York: SUNY.
- Gelblum, T. (1992). Notes on an English Translation of the Yogasūtrabhāṣyavivaraṇa. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 55(1), 76–89.
- Gethin, R. (2007). *The Buddhist path to awakening*. Oxford: Oneworld.
- Gibbs, R. (2017). *Metaphor wars: Conceptual metaphors in human life*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gold, J. C. (2015). *Paving the great way: Vasubandhu's unifying Buddhist philosophy*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Gombrich, R. (1996). *How Buddhism began: The conditioned genesis of the early teachings*. London: Athlone.
- Harimoto, K. (Ed.). (2014). *God, reason, and yoga: A critical edition and translation of the commentary ascribed to Saṅkara on Pātañjalayogaśāstra*. Hamburg: University of Hamburg.
- Harrison, P. (2003). Mediums and messages: Reflections on the production of Mahāyāna Sūtras. *The Eastern Buddhist*, 35, 1–2.
- Johnson, M. (2005). The philosophical significance of image schemas. In B. Hampe & J. Grady (Eds.), *From perception to meaning: Image schemas in cognitive linguistics*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Kaelber, W. (1989). *Tapta Mārga: Asceticism and initiation in vedic India*. Albany: SUNY.
- Kamber, G., & Macksey, R. (1970). "Negative metaphor" and Proust's rhetoric of absence. *Modern Language Notes*, 85, 6.
- Klostermeier, K. (1986). Dharmamegha samādhi: Comments on Yogasūtra IV, 29. *Philosophy East and West*, 36(3), 253–262.
- Koelman, G. (1970). *Pātañjalayoga: From related ego to absolute self*. Poona: Papal Athenaeum.
- Kövecses, Z. (2005). *Metaphor in culture: Universality and variation*. Oxford: Cambridge University Press.
- Kövecses, Z. (2006). *Language, mind, and culture: A practical introduction*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Kövecses, Z. (2015). *Where metaphors come from: Reconsidering context in metaphor*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kragh, U. T. (2013). *The foundation for yoga practitioners: The Buddhist Yogācārabhūmi treatise and its adaptation in India, East Asia, and Tibet*. Harvard oriental series. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lakoff, G. (1987). *Women, fire and dangerous things: What categories reveal about the mind*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lakoff, G., & Turner, T. (1989). *More than cool reason: A field guide to poetic metaphor*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Larson, G., & Bhattacharya, R. S. (2008). *Encyclopedia of Indian philosophies, Volume XII. Yoga: India's philosophy of meditation*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited.
- Maas, P. (2010). On the Written Transmission of the Pātañjalayogaśāstra. In J. Bronkhorst & K. Preisendanz (Eds.), *From Vasubandhu to Caitanya: Studies in Indian philosophy and its textual history*. Delhi: World Sanskrit.

- Maas, P. (2013). A Concise Historiography of Classical Yoga. In E. Franco (Ed.), *Periodisation and historiography of Indian philosophy*. Vienna: University of Vienna.
- Maas, P. (2014). Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma and the Yoga of Patañjali. Paper presented at the 17th Congress of the International Association of Buddhist Studies, University of Vienna, Austria, August 18–23, 2014.
- Malalasekera, G. P. (1938). *Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names* (Vol. 2). London: John Murray.
- Norman, K. R. (2006). *A philological approach to Buddhism*. Lancaster: PTS.
- O'Brien-Kop, K. (2017). Classical discourses of liberation: Shared botanical metaphors in Sarvāstivāda Buddhism and the yoga of Patañjali. *Religions of South Asia*, 11(2–3), 123–157. <https://doi.org/10.1558/rosa.37021>.
- O'Brien-Kop, K. (2018). Seed and cloud as metaphors of liberation in Buddhist and Pātañjala yoga: An Intertextual study. Unpublished PhD dissertation, SOAS University of London, UK.
- Proferes, T. (2007). *Vedic ideals of sovereignty and the poetics of power*. New Haven, CT: American Oriental Society.
- Rukmani, T. (2007). Dharmamegha-samādhi in the Yogasūtras of Patañjali: A critique. *Philosophy East and West*, 57(2), 131–139.
- Sakuma, H. S. (2013). Remarks on the lineage of Indian Masters of the Yogācāra School: Maitreya, Asaṅga, and Vasubandhu. In U. T. Kragh (Ed.), *The foundation for yoga practitioners: The Buddhist Yogācārabhūmi treatise and its adaptation in India, East Asia, and Tibet*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Schertzer, M. (1986). *The elements of grammar*. London: Collier Macmillan.
- Schmithausen, L. (2016) *Collected Papers Volume 1: 1963-1977*. In: Deleanu, F. et al. (eds) *Lambert Schmithausen: Collected papers, Volume 1 1963-1977*. Studio Philologica Buddhica: Monograph Series, XXXIVa. Tokyo: The International Institute for Buddhist Studies.
- Schopen, G. (2006). A Well-Sanitized Shroud: Asceticism and Institutional Values in the Middle Period of Buddhist Monasticism. In P. Olivelle (Ed.), *Between the empires: Society in India 300 BCE to 400 CE*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Silk, J. (2000). The Yogācāra Bhikṣu. In *Wisdom, compassion, and the search for understanding: The Buddhist studies legacy of Gadjin M. Nagao*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Skorupski, T. (2009). Clouds, their emotions and mysteries. In Z. de Weck (Ed.), *Cloud choreography and other emergent systems*. London: Parasol Unit/Koenig Books.
- Tubb, G., & Boose, E. (2007). *Scholastic Sanskrit: A manual for students*. New York: American Institute of Buddhist Studies, Columbia University.
- Wujastyk, D. (2018). Some problematic yoga Sūtra-s and their Buddhist background. In K. Baier et al. (Eds.), *Yoga in transformation: Historical and contemporary perspectives*. Vienna: Vienna University Press.